THE

NEW JERUSALEM MAGAZINE.

VOL. IV. — NEW SERIES. — NOS. 11 AND 12.

DECEMBER, 1880.

USES OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.*

THOSE who are trying to live good lives, but who are unconnected with any religious society, often ask themselves and others the question, "What good will it do me to join the Church?" The young and the old make this inquiry. They have no objection to urge against the truths of the Church; their difficulty is that they do not see precisely how joining an outward organization is going to help them. As long as they are unable to understand the uses of Church membership, they dread making any outward profession, for fear that they shall fall short of the standard they have chosen, or lapse into hypocrisy. Such feelings are to be respected, because they are right. Nothing should be undertaken without consulting its use. Least of all, should the important step of associating one'sself with a body of the Church be taken, without understanding something of the spiritual advantages of so doing. They who enroll themselves on the list of church members merely because their pastor, church committee, parents, or friends, desire them to do so; or, merely because others of about the same age and experience are coming into the Church, will derive little benefit from such a step. The individual mind must be open to the understanding of the truth, and the individual heart must actively respond to the good of mutual association, or else the connection will be formal and of little avail.

* Reported to the Massachusetts Association from the Committee of Ministers.

We shall be sure of the steps we take if we approach this subject in a simple way. We know that it is good and useful to be associated together for the performance of natural uses. The evil-intentioned, the robber and murderer, shun society, except when they come to it to plunder and destroy. The well-disposed live in communities and accomplish their successes in the midst of association with others. Experience teaches that railroads, public works, large manufacturing interests, are better managed by several rather than by single individuals. "Two heads are wiser than one," as the saying is. Charity is more wisely dispensed by Boards of Charity, or Overseers of the Poor, than by the individual. Literary culture is better imparted by the university or college, than by the isolated teacher. We might multiply examples showing the good attained by association, but it is needless. The reasons for the good results thus obtained are obvious. Many minds acting together make a more powerful mind, many hearts beating as one afford larger motive power. This law seems to be written on the universe itself. Almost all the animals, excepting those living upon flesh, go in herds; almost all the birds, excepting the flesh-eating, live in flocks. The trees grow in clumps or forests. This instinct and inclination are from spiritual influx. The universe is one: the Divine Being made it one. Being thus made, one part must necessarily seek for union with the other parts, establishing the closest union with those nearest like itself.

The habits of the good animal and tree reflect the order of heaven. If they, almost without exception, live and act in communities, if they are strongest and happiest when united, why should not man be?

But we are not left to learn the necessity of association, by inference from the rest of creation, strong and conclusive as this inference is. Man, while he can more closely conjoin himself with his fellow beings than bird or beast, and while he has the power, also, to make this union spiritual and eternal, which power the beasts do not have, can be

immensely more selfish than they, and can withdraw himself a greater distance from other beings. The Lord knows the coldness and selfishness of our natures, so He teaches us in His Word the same lesson He has taught in nature. The use and desirableness of association could not be more emphasized than it is in PSALM cxxxiii.: "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there Jehovah commanded the blessing, life forever more.*" "*Where two or three are gathered together,*" he says in the New Testament, "*there am I in the midst of them.*" He chose not one, but twelve disciples to represent Him. He sent forth the disciples two by two to evangelize the world. He was not a recluse, but lived among men. In his prayer for those who follow Him, He says, "*I pray not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they be kept from the evil.*" He always loved men; but that love was more full after He had assumed the humanity, and lived as a man, among men, on earth. His presence is promised to "*two or three gathered together in His name*" — not that He will not come to man when alone, but that more of His presence will be felt when man is united with other men. He loves many more than one; hence, if we are conjoined to the many, we are united closer to Him — we have more of His spirit, we are more fully in His image and likeness.

From the Bible we learn that it is a good thing to be united as brethren. The purpose of being united as brethren is to learn to do the things that the Bible teaches; for this makes us brethren — children of the same Heavenly Father, members of the same spiritual family. He wants us to be in His image and likeness; He loves all men. We must love all men to be His children; to love them we must understand them, to understand them we must be associated with them. The same love which leads us to separate ourselves from others, separates us from the Lord.

The Church is instituted for the sake of helping men into heaven: it is, or is intended to be, a little heaven on earth. It accomplishes its end by assisting us to understand and do the truth taught in the Bible. We have a just and adequate motive in joining the Church when we unite with it for the sake of this spiritual life. The tacit and blind acknowledgment of the fact that the Church advances spiritual life is not sufficient for our purpose. We want to see, rationally, how the Church helps us. Union with others helps us overcome our selfishness in its various forms; and it is selfishness that we most need to overcome. If we live alone and work alone, we are very likely to feel our own importance. The Church brings us in close communion with others as important, if not more important than we are. We recognize, if we are well-disposed, that we must do justice to them, and acknowledge their rights. This involves a humbling of self. The process helps rid us of our petty notions, our weaknesses and evils, and, accordingly, renders us more useful to the world.

Those who go to heaven, first learn how to work with others. One of the great uses of Church membership is to teach us this lesson, which is sometimes so hard to learn. We can learn it a great deal easier inside than we can outside of Church organizations. Spirits, in the world of spirits, are trained in choirs, so that they can act in unity; and this before they are elevated into heavenly societies. This process does not sink the individuality; it elevates it: it merely separates it from all that is foolish and unreasonable, and positively wrong; thus from all that is inharmonious with the common good. What does not harmonize with this good and disregards it, does not come from the Lord, consequently it has not true individuality. The natural way of working is to work all alone, and get the credit for working; the heavenly way of working is to work for and with others, claiming no merit for ourselves.

The fear that we must give up our freedom to join a society of the Church, springs from the natural love of working

in our own way. Freedom is of two kinds, one is real, the other apparent. True freedom comes from the truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "*Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.*" If we join the Church for the help it can give us in living a good life, we renounce something of false freedom, which is, essentially, slavery to sin; but we gain in real freedom, because we learn from the many, new forms of truth, and acquire from them new affection for it. These qualities free us from the enslaving power of our evils. Whatever we lose in spiritual association with others is always our gain: we lose only that which cannot be taken to heaven, we are deprived only of that which comes from hell.

The fear that the individual is not good enough deters some from uniting with the Church. The Church is not an association of masters and lords, but of servants and disciples. It is composed of those who are trying to be good, not of those who are already good; for "none is good, save one, God." No man is so good that he does not need association with others; the better he is, the more he craves this association. The recognition of one's own sinful tendencies, and the earnest desire to overcome them, are sufficient motives for uniting with the Church, where such help is afforded. He has some good who "*hungers and thirsts after righteousness; and he shall be filled*," the Lord and His Church are glad to nourish such desires.

We feel an increased sense of responsibility on joining the Church. It is good for us to feel responsibility. We feel it in proportion as we are in good. The evil feel little, if any, responsibility, although they often take great responsibilities upon themselves. We may shrink from assuming the responsibility of joining the Church: we in reality assume a greater responsibility by remaining out of it, if we love its truth. To associate with others is the orderly way to heaven; to go alone is disorderly. To assume that we can go without the help of association is assuming large responsibility. The fact that the person who thus separates

himself does not realize his responsibility so much as he does when he meditates uniting with others, is on account of his own blindness. The responsibility is there all the same. The fact that he does see his responsibility more clearly from association with others in spiritual uses is proof of the good that such association does him. The deeper our sense of responsibility, the deeper our life. Life would be tame without responsibility, utterly profane without regard to the sacred trusts imposed upon us. Responsibility is a spur and incentive, throwing enough of seriousness into life to preserve it from sacrilege. The fact that the Church increases our sense of responsibility shows that it gives us freedom; for the two qualities are one.

If we are identified with some society of the Church, we are led to recognize the good in that society, thence in the commonwealth and in the nation. We are less exposed to harsh criticism of our fellow-men. A member of a family is not so likely to indulge in morbid criticism of the rest of the family, as one is who only visits the family, but who is not identified with it. Close union with others in moral, political, and spiritual uses helps us to be as charitable to them as we are to ourselves, to be as hopeful of the Church, of the State and nation, as we learn to be in the slow process of our own regeneration. Spiritual association is, therefore, useful in the removal of the prevalent habit of complaining.

We are each destined for some angelic society: that we shall reach that society is the Divine desire. If we let the Lord lead us, we shall be brought into one of these mansions prepared for us by our Father. The ultimate, the earthly counterpart of the spiritual society, is the Church society. When we are fully and usefully connected with an earthly society for the advancement of the Lord's kingdom on earth, we are more fully conjoined with the heavenly society. We are doing things here that must be done before we can be happy in heaven. How much better that we should begin early to put away our idiosyncrasies and fol-

lies, our narrownesses and evils, rather than that they should be more deeply rooted by procrastination.

We have suggested some things which may help to answer the question, "What good will it do me to join the Church?" We would suggest the usefulness of asking another question, namely, "What good can I do to others by joining the Church?" To inquire what good we shall, ourselves, obtain from a society of the Church is naturally the first question, because we are, naturally, most interested in our own good. After having satisfied ourselves in this direction, we should take a broader, more unselfish view of the situation.

Every new, open acknowledgment of the truth, if it is sincere, is a new embodiment of truth, and therefore a new power of truth. The more fully this acknowledgment is made, the more powerful it is. It is thereafter easier for others to acknowledge it, not only with the lips, but in the life. It is written: "I will declare what He hath done for my soul." There is a use in uttering the internal convictions of right. It strengthens them in ourselves and in others; it clothes them with bodies, it perfects them by giving them a natural form.

Spirits coming from earth are welcomed in the spiritual world as new food for the body. Every worthy accession to a society feeds that society and its individual members. They feel the effects of the internal victories that the new member has undergone on account of the truth he loves. They feel the power therein gained; they welcome him to the uses which he is fitted to perform among them, and which no one of their present number is so well able to perform, and this encourages them to a better doing of their own special uses. His accession makes that society a more perfect man, and thus each one of its members a more perfect man. When he goes out into the world, he carries the sphere of the earthly society of the Church with him. It strengthens him in the hour of temptation, it opens his understanding and heart, and helps him do his daily work among men.

The outward act of confessing the Lord, and the desire to do His commandments, spiritually locate the individual; others feel freer to approach him; he feels freer to draw nearer to those who want to love the truth with him. Thus he is helped into the use he can best perform. Nothing is so full of blessing as that which brings us to those we can spiritually help. The Church invites us to join her that she may help us to do this good.

Joining the Church is a duty to the Lord and the neighbor. It is a means whereby we may "honor father and mother." But this duty is forced upon no one. We are called "friends," and to the "friend" it is given to "know what his Lord doeth." To those who can freely and intelligently see this duty, it is a happy way of honoring their Heavenly Father and spiritual mother. The Lord is our Father, the Church, our spiritual mother; it helps us to "honor" these spiritual parents, to place ourselves more fully under their direction and influence. The nearer we come to them, the more we can love them and do for them, thus the more can we "honor" them.

"LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE."

One, standing in a twilight-darkened room,
Unto the friends who waited with him there,
Fain would show forth a precious thing and rare,
But might not, for the dimness and the gloom.

So kindled he a lamp, before whose light
The shadows fled, as from a spear of flame:
And o'er those friends a joy and wonder came
For the fair thing thus given to their sight.

But none bethought himself to say: "How clear,
How bright this flame! How worthy of all praise
This lamp, which bringeth to our eager gaze
What the dark, else, had hidden from us here!"

Nay; but from all those friends the cry there came:
"Show us the Master who hath wrought this thing!
Us to his dwelling, friend, we pray thee bring,
That we may honor him, and know his name!"

Thus from the beauteous work, they turned them straight
Unto the artist who had made it fair;
And in the gloom they left behind them there
Burned the forgotten lamp: and night waxed late.

. . . . . .

Thou knowest how, O Lord of might and grace!
Men's doubt and sin do turn Thy day to night;
And all our truth is as a little light
That burneth in a dim and shadowy place.

Yet still the light is kindled by Thy hand,
And Thou canst make it clear and pure to shine,
So it illume some wondrous word of Thine,
Till men shall read, and reading, understand —

And cry, "Lead us to Him Who spake this Word!
That we may learn of Him, low at His feet:"
Then shall they come to find Thy service sweet,
And love Thee evermore, and own Thee Lord.

Even as Thou wilt. Lead souls into Thy rest
Through Thy great Word, read by our feeble light;
Or let our lamps waste far into the night
Unmarked of men — for Thou rememberest.

Only one prayer we pray. Lord, set us free
From selfish hearts, greedy for thanks and praise;
Make us content, that men, led to Thy ways,
Forget us, and go hastening home to Thee.

MISSIONARY WORK. *

It has occurred to me, in accordance with the desire of the Association, expressed on a former occasion, to occupy a short time in some remarks upon the missionary service, which is recognized as, at least, one of our most important uses. And that this service ought to hold this prominent place may well be inferred from the Lord's last command, as given in substance in the two first Evangelists.

In Matthew he says: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (xxviii. 19,20.)

In Mark it is recorded: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." (xvi. 15, 16.)

The two declarations, though somewhat different in form, are similar in substance. In Matthew there is the simple command what to do — to make disciples of all nations, to baptize them, and to teach them those things which are revealed. What the apostles *are to do* is the prominent thing. What the result will be is not brought out. In the command as given in Mark, the result is distinctly brought to view. The duty of going into all the world, and preaching the Gospel to every creature, is enforced with the declaration, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." That is, the Divine truth opened by the Lord at his first coming,—and precisely the same is the case with the truth opened by him at his second coming,—is the means of life and salvation to men. He that believes this and is spiritually baptized, that is, regenerated by it, avails himself of the means of salvation. And he who does not receive it in faith, love, and life, shuts

* Address delivered to the Massachusetts Association.

out from himself that which alone can qualify him for association with angels in heaven.

By this we are not to understand that no one can enter heaven but he who makes of his life here in this world, all the truth that the Lord laid open at his first and second coming. Many have no opportunity for this in this world, many have little opportunity, and very many but poorly improve the opportunity they have. But they who have begotten in them, in this life, a capacity for receiving what the Lord has revealed, will have the opportunity and means of completing what has been commenced here, in the world of spirits. No one is ever saved until he believes, and is formed anew, at least in some measure, by this gospel.

Since this is so, with what emphasis does the command, "Go, make disciples of all nations," and "go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," come to us. By doing it as well as we are able, we do what we can to save the souls of men. By failing to do what we are able, we come short of contributing our part to the performance of what is, in a sense, the greatest of all uses in heaven or on earth.

But we need to have some distinct view as to the ways in which we are to work for the promotion of this transcendent use. There are three aspects under which the duty imposed by the command under consideration may be viewed. One, or the *first*, is to go subjectively into all the regions of our own minds, the less and more remote ones, and teach all the nations there whatsoever we have interiorly received from the Lord and acknowledged, and what he has in this way commanded us.

The *second* is to give all possible aid to those who are in a similar faith and acknowledgment with ourselves, in publishing the gospel to all nations in themselves.

And the *third* is, to furnish such assistance as we are capable of giving to those who have not received, with distinct acknowledgment, the Lord in his second coming, with the new glad tidings that he brings.

In a sense these things come in the order in which they are stated. It is our duty first, to preach the gospel to every creature subjectively, to all the nations, more or less remote, in ourselves. Next, it is our duty to aid our brethren in doing this. And third, it is our duty, with our brethren, to do, judiciously, all that we can in the way of making disciples of the New Age the nations around, more or less remote, all that we can to teach and quicken into life every creature. But we must not infer from this, that the first of these duties is to be all performed and finished before the second is undertaken, and that this is to be completed before the third is entered upon. The first, second, and third are, in a sense, one, and are all to be carried on together. We are to be making disciples of all nations in the first, the second, and the third sense, all together, and to do what we can to lead to the observance of all the things that have come into our interior acknowledgment.

This, that these three are to be done all together, will now receive a few moments' attention.

The holy city, New Jerusalem, the Lord's church on the earth, comes down from heaven; and heaven is united; its various parts are in such a relation to one another that they form a one. Each one is connected with the whole, and the whole with each one. Now, as heaven is the soul, and the church on earth is the body, therefore heaven in its action into the church on earth, is in a relation to it which is similar to the relation of the soul to every part of the body. We know that when the soul wills some useful purpose which requires the co-operation of the body, it actuates every part of the body for its one purpose. It moves the head, the heart, the lungs, the muscles used in walking, those used in speaking; in short, it moves every part of the body to contribute its peculiar use to the accomplishment of the purpose in view. Heaven being related in a manner, which this illustrates, to the church on earth, it follows that there is a harmony and unity in the influx from heaven into every portion of the church on earth.

The primary object of the influx is to cause the gospel—the truths and the goods of the new dispensation—to be everywhere received; to cause every creature to believe and to be baptized, that is, regenerated, by the gospel. This is the one effort in which the whole heaven is united; and it is this one effort which the whole body, the church, feels from its soul, which is heaven. Hence it follows that if we are properly receiving, and being actuated by the influx from heaven into ourselves,—if we are honestly and faithfully co-operating in the work of our regeneration, which it is the end and effort of the Lord, through heaven, to effect,—we are effectually participating in that one work which the soul in heaven is inspiring into the body on earth. And if we could see what is being done internally, we should see that the work which there is an effort to accomplish in us, and which, if we faithfully co-operate, is in some degree accomplished, is substantially the same which there is an effort to do everywhere on earth, and which is everywhere accomplished so far as is possible. And hence we may see that when we are allowing the primary object of the heavenly influx to be accomplished in ourselves, when we are, in our measure, allowing the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles, to all the remote nations in ourselves, we are not only doing what other faithful ones everywhere are doing, but are joining, internally, our efforts with theirs, and are actually assisting them in the work, as they are actually assisting us in it. Thus we are internally, in a sense, preaching the gospel to every creature, and every creature is, internally, in a sense doing the same. This is the case with those who are near—those who have a more full and interior reception—and with those who are remote. And so, we are internally preaching the gospel to all nations, in each of the three senses mentioned.

That the church on the earth is in a connection with heaven like that of the body with the soul, and that there is a unity in the states of all who are receptive, though the general impression is far otherwise, there are many indica-

tions, if our eyes are open to see them. If we are receptive of the heavenly effort, when we meet interiorly others who are receptive, we shall often see most strikingly, that however remote in some respects they may be from us, precisely the same cause that is operating with them is operating with us, and that heaven is in the effort to accomplish the same object with them as it is with us. This is said in illustration of the fact, that in faithfully doing what heaven incites us to do, we are, in all the senses, *internally*, preaching the gospel to every creature.

But though this is good and altogether essential, yet this is not by any means all that is needed. Not only in the world, but even in heaven, external means must be added to the internal influx and operation. The angels, though internally united to the Lord, and receptive in a high degree of influx from him, still need the Word in an external form, and instruction from it. There is the office of the ministry, and even of the missionary, in heaven, and this office is an indispensable means of progress in what is good. And not only are there in heaven external means for cultivating heavenly life, and for advancing in it, such as meeting together in temples, and teaching and listening to instruction from the Word,—indispensable uses fully recognized by us in this world,—but there was also, at the beginning of the new age, at least, a sending forth of the apostles as missionaries to all parts of the spiritual world, to proclaim the new doctrines.

This we learn from its being twice stated in the "True Christian Religion." At the close of the last chapter of that work, Swedenborg says:

"After this work was finished, the Lord called together his twelve disciples who followed him in the world, and the next day sent them all forth into the whole spiritual world, to preach the gospel that the Lord God, Jesus Christ, reigns, whose kingdom shall be for ages of ages, according to the prediction, DAN. chap. vii. 13, 14; and in the APOC. chap. xi. 15; and that they are blessed who approach the marriage supper of the Lamb, APOC.

xix. 9. This occurred on the 19th of June, 1770. This is meant by the words of the Lord, 'He shall send forth his angels and shall gather together his elect [from the boundaries of heaven to its boundaries], from one end of the heavens to the other.'" ½(n. 791.)

Now, we may see, not only from the fact that missionaries were sent forth throughout the spiritual world to proclaim the truth that the Lord God, Jesus Christ, reigns, that it may be our duty to perform a similar work in this world, but also from the use it was designed to effect, that is, to gather together; that is, to minister to the elect everywhere. The elect are they who, from being in some good of life from obedience to what they know, are in a state to receive the great, general, all-comprehending truth, that the Lord God, Jesus Christ, reigns, and at least, the other equally universal truth, that salvation is from a life according to his precepts. If the proclamation of this truth throughout the spiritual world was necessary on account of the elect there, can it be less necessary in this world, on their account here?

No one, indeed, but the Lord, knows where these are; but we have no reason to doubt that in general there are more or fewer of them everywhere. And since this may be so, is it not our duty to provide, as far as we are able, that everywhere, men should be well provided with the knowledge of the gospel of the new age, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only God of heaven and earth, and that in order to be saved, the life must be formed by his precepts. Is it not the duty of all who are disciples of the new age, in such ways as they have qualifications for, to engage in this use? Is it not the duty of all ministers, so far as they are able, to minister to the needs of the elect, wherever they have, or can conveniently make, opportunity? And is it not the duty of laymen, by their means, and in other suitable ways, to co-operate also in this work? And if, in the Divine Providence we have men who are especially qualified for the work of giving to the elect who are in the circumference, and not receptive of the doctrines in their fulness,—

men who can make it known to these in such a form that they can receive it in heart and life, that the Lord God, Jesus Christ, reigns,—should we not see to it that they are provided with the means of devoting themselves to this use, and make arrangements for their bringing forth their heavenly message as extensively as possible throughout the land, and, as the way opens, throughout the world?

But here the inquiry may arise, whether, in the improved condition of religious bodies that do not distinctly recognize the new age, and the advanced instruction provided by their regular teachers, there is not provided by the Lord, in sufficient measure, what is needed? We ought to be glad and fervently grateful for the fact to which the inquiry refers. And we may well rest in this, if, with all due diligence on our part, nothing better can be seen to be provided. If the way were open for nothing more than giving the means of understanding to the teachers, then here is our limit. But if we are provided with those who, being in a full acknowledgment of the new age, are able to set forth before the community its distinguishing characteristics, in a manner so acceptable that multitudes are drawn together to learn them, it is an indication that we have an important duty in this direction. The Lord always provides for everything that needs to be done. And as we certainly are not entirely wanting in men or in means to do something of this wide missionary work, is it not our duty, more than we have, to send forth what laborers we have, into the fields, at least in some measure, white for the harvest? And is it not, especially also, our duty, by effectually preaching the gospel to all nations—every creature—in ourselves, to contribute to opening the way for a wider annunciation and reception of the Lord in his second coming?

THE VALLEY OF ACHOR.

From tribe to tribe the awful judgment passed, —
From house to house, and then from man to man, —
Until at Achan's feet the lot was cast,
And through the crowd a stifled murmur ran.

Detected, then, the son of Carmi stood,
Who, coveting the heathen's wealth untold,
Had hid beneath his tent a garment good,
With store of silver and a wedge of gold.

There came upon him shame and deadly fear,
For round about him threatening hands were raised, —
When on the troubled air there sounded clear
The leader's voice, "My son, let God be praised."

"Let God be praised, whose hand has ta'en away,
The flimsy veil which hid thy sin and shame.
Let God be praised who sends the light of day
To banish night. Give glory to His name."

Repentant now, and sad from sense of shame,
With bowing head my voice I yet will raise,
To humbly echo, "Glory to His name,"
And join the swelling cry, "To God the praise."

All praise to Him who oft the sinner stays
While swift descending on his downward course;
Awake my soul and sing, "To God the praise
Who helps his people with a mighty force."

In Achor's valley lieth with the dead
Achan, "the troubler," slain these many years;
God grant that from our hearts be ever sped
Achan, our troubler, with his sins and fears.

"The vale of Achor," thus the prophet says,
"A door of hope, a vineyard green shall be:"
Then shout aloud, "To Israel's God give praise
Who sets us all from Achan's bondage free."

THEORIES OF THE CREATION.

So much is to be read on every hand about the creation, whether it was done by God in the exercise of unlimited love and wisdom, or by God under law, or by the uncontrolled exercise of natural forces, that the patrons of the MAGAZINE may be willing to read an essay upon the subject written from the New-Church point of view.

Let the question first be asked, What is the oldest idea in the universe? What, so far as any one knows, was the first thing to be written down, when writing came into use, and, before that, to be sacredly preserved as the most important of all facts? What bit of knowledge is held to-day by all nations as the first their ancestors deemed it important to transmit from prehistoric antiquity? When Moses, learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, was led, under Divine Guidance, to write the story of his people, — and thus spiritually of all people, — and was led to prefix to it from documents of a still more ancient period, some portions deemed all important to be handed down forever, what was written first of all? The great fact that God created both heaven and earth.

This idea is everywhere the oldest possession of men. In the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, men have found the tablets of clay on which, while they were soft, were written the sacred truths of those very ancient peoples, and then the tablets were baked and carefully laid away under the corner-stones of great temples. What was first written there? The same great idea of God, the Creator of all things.

Other remains of ancient knowledge have been preserved in various ways. In the systems of mythology to be found in every quarter of the earth, more or less full according to the greater or less degree of intelligence of the people, the same idea stands ever at the head.

Moreover, it was not the bare idea of creation by God,

whose *power* alone was thus brought into mind, but He seems always to have been viewed religiously, and to have been spoken of under the title of "Father." He was regarded from the first as children regard their kind, strong, wise fathers. Max Müller, the great student of comparative theology, tells us that in the Veda, the ancient sacred writing of India, in the Greek mythology and in the Latin, He is called by the same name, which means "Heaven-Father." "Thousands of years," says Müller, in a famous passage, "thousands of years have passed since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the North and the South, the East and the West; they have each formed their languages; they have each founded empires and philosophies; they have each built temples and razed them to the ground; they have all grown older, and it may be wiser and better; but when they search for a name for what is most exalted and most dear to every one of us; when they wish to express both awe and love, they can but do what their old fathers did when gazing up to the eternal sky, and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far, as near as near can be; they can but combine the self-same words, and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven-Father, in that form which will endure forever, 'Our Father, who art in Heaven.'"

These words plainly indicate the effect of historic research upon devout minds. They find in the possession of every race the same great idea of the Infinite Fatherhood; and they see, as they run back over the ages, that the one Source of all things is recognized and recorded.

And let it be remarked, that this discovery of other sacred knowledges, in the possession of other races, by no means interferes with our faith in our Scriptures as the Word of God. As sacred histories, they confirm and vindicate the history of the Bible; and when we see that within the story of the creation lies the story of human regeneration, — a story without time and confined to no place, — we thenceforth see the sacred, invaluable history to be full of Divine inspiration which, stored up there for ages, and long time

hidden from the eyes of sensual men, has now been re-revealed never again to be lost sight of.

This idea of the creation by God, as given in Genesis, is so general as to be held in contentment by a little child, or by an unscientific race or individual; but the minds of mature students seek further particulars. They naturally wish to know something of the processes, and thus to enter into details; and this is perfectly reasonable.

These details, however, are not given in the Scriptures with much fulness, nor are they found in the various gentile systems of cosmogony. It is said in our Word that at first there was emptiness and lack of form, then light came, then sky and sea, then dry land, then vegetation, then sun, moon and stars appeared, then fishes and birds, then land animals, and finally man. But it is not here told of what the earth was made, nor in what time. There is an appearance that it was said to be made in so many days, but the language does not state this. It would not imply it to people who knew the Hebrew language. A recent writer maintains that the period which a Hebraist would understand to be denoted by each of the seven days of Genesis was the Chaldean cycle, equivalent to forty-three thousand two hundred years. However this may be, it is certain that days of twenty-four hours ought never to be associated with this account, except in little children's minds.

In the effort to obtain the details of the process of creation, men have done at various times the best they could. During the dark period which preceded the present epoch, they were so unintelligent as to assert that the creation was completed in seven days, and that the world was made out of nothing. Nor was it strange that they should believe these unscientific ideas to be a part of the very account in Genesis, nor that they should allow no one to question their opinion. The history of the darkness of that period cannot be exhibited here, but it is matter of fact; and it would not be difficult, even in our own day, to find those who cannot yet separate these erroneous additions from the true Scriptures.

Lately, new light has come to men. Not only have they been investigating all things as never before, but they have succeeded in discovering facts which had lain concealed, and these discoveries have wrought such a revolution in scientific matters as to give a new interpretation to Genesis in the minds of some, and to completely overthrow it in the opinions of others.

Men of the most marvellous acuteness have spent their lives in the study of the processes of creation. No longer deterred by dread of condemnation, if anything antagonistic to received opinion should be discovered, they have sought answers to every question anew, and are still seeking in many countries but united by the common love of penetrating into the particulars of nature, and of constructing thence theories and sciences.

In regard to the creation, they have learned that it extended through long periods, and indeed is still in progress in its last period which is that of the adaptation of nature to the needs of humanity. They have also learned to divide and sub-divide these periods into stages of progress; and they agree that the beginning was in the motion of nebulous material (star-dust, some call it), which motion followed spiral lines and thus formed centres of compacted substance, and that these continued to gyrate till their surfaces became hardened, and began to produce life.

This, in a general way, is the common scientific opinion, but beyond this theories have taken two paths. The one is that pursued by all scientists who believe the beginning to have been made by God, and they hold that the world exhibits the action of mind upon matter. The other class deny this, and hold that all things have come about by the unaided action of uncreated physical forces.

The present attitude of scientists, in regard to such a question, becomes a matter of importance to every intelligent person when it is remembered that all men desire to be in full accord with scientific dicta, and that in their conclusions on the point in question their faith depends.

As to the first view, let it be said that it offers no antagnism to the view which is deduced from the principles of Divine Life now made manifest in the genuine meaning of the Word, and which will be referred to more fully before closing. The other view, to which the names of Spencer, Huxley, and others is attached, is to be briefly considered. Although it has not obtained the acceptance of philosophical minds, it has allured to discipleship many people, — especially young and enthusiastic people, — through the abundance of facts which seemed to support it; and the brilliant scientific record of some who received it.

It regards the gradual process of creation as a self-ordered evolution. It denies God and all connection of mind with the creation. It "explains the existing order of things as altogether due to the forces inhering in the things created." Evidences of this uncaused life it finds everywhere, as it believes. The most degraded nations are believed to be nearest the primeval. Religion is held to be an outgrowth of superstitious ignorance, itself to be outgrown in time. The dread of ghosts, or the unreasoning horror of departed spirits is declared to be the origin of belief in the spiritual or supernatural. In the end, according to Dr. Maudsley, man will not be Christ-like, but "in such perfect harmony with environing nature as to be without memory, feeling, reason, or will."

This view seems to have had its day. The faults in the Darwinian theory of the development of higher species from lower have been pointed out, and now from every hand come criticisms of the Spencerian system of evolution, showing its weaknesses, in that it *assumes* more than the religious view does, namely: the existence of effects without adequate causes; in that it is loose in classification, and rash in conclusion; in that it leads to degrading results in respect to marriage and the family; in that it declares the unplanned origin of nature, when no one can conceive of order and system without mental action; and in that it denies God, when an infinite plan demands, on every account, an

infinite proposer and controller. The conceit of such a view, held in spite of the knowledge of all ages as to the general idea of a Divine creation, is evident.

The harmful effect of holding such a view seems to be that it is a surrender of the intellect to a fallacy which cannot be held without weakening the judgment; while the moral harm is that it leads its devotees to regard religion only as a transient phase of progress not founded upon the truth, and not to be believed in or taught sincerely, but only as the remedy for restlessness required by people not yet enlightened enough to dispense with faith in the Heavenly Father.

What is the view to which a reasonable mind is led? It must of course accept the aid of all true science. It may cast aside fallacious deductions, but it must accept facts. Also, it must respect the inheritance of the ages, and give due weight to the uniform declaration of all records that God created the earth. Can it combine these two ideas? The Spencerians say, "No," and flee to the absurd idea that things evidently wrought out are uncreated, that is, self-created. But others will say, "Yes," and easily prove it. For example, one may take a building. It does not come together. *Mind* forms the idea first, and then seeks its materials, and fashions them, and joins them, and so makes the house. The mind of the builder, however, did not deal with the origin of the timber, the creation of the earth on which the building stands, nor with the devising of the great forces and laws by means of which and in accordance with which the work is done. Whence, then, were these than from some other mind than the builder's? This must be granted at once. Then take another object, as a book. It did not come about of itself. A mind has written it, has made the types, and set them, and corrected the proofs, and bound the volume. But no human mind produced the physical facts or mental life treated of in the book, nor the metals used in the type-making, nor the forces which gave power to the presses.

Other illustrations would all point the same way, namely: to the conclusion that another mind, of incomparably greater capacity, also had to do with such matters. And the general result will be an irresistible amount of evidence that another Mind, of infinite capacity, has been at work in the universe, and is at work to-day; and that men's minds, in a small compass, act with or against that Infinite Mind; with it, for instance, when man builds well; against it, for instance, when he builds so ill that the building falls. But the wonderful, intellectual strength of this great Mind is very loving, for it is seen that it makes beauty and joy and tender affection. So it is fatherly, and the thought comes round to the old idea again; and the more science men know, the more they should know the Divine Fatherliness.

Considering now that species have never been developed from each other, though within their own bounds they have increased with wonderful variety, and that physical functions, like gravitation or the laws of chemical action, have not been known to evolve mental functions like reasoning or love, and that reason approves the religious view only, men must give up the evolutionary hypothesis as unproved after fair trial. And, having done so, they will ask for some equally definite view in its place.

The ease, with which all scientific data will join with the idea of Divine Creatorship, has been seen. To this, in the principles of philosophy which flow from the faith of the New Church, many particulars are added, of which some may be enumerated. Such particulars, it should be first remarked, are necessarily of a spiritual sort. Science brings out the details of nature: the realm of religion is higher, and the philosophy which is religious has to do with the great principles which enter into nature. If, in recent times, philosophy has become almost one with physics, it will rise again ere long, and be as Aristotle called it, "the science of being," or as Plato defined it, "the search after true knowledge."

1. God is Infinitely Human —having, as man does in his

finite degree, the attributes of Mind, which attributes are Love, Wisdom, and Power.

2. Infinite Love would seek objects of love, of care, of blessing, external to Itself; and hence would create.

3. Infinite Wisdom, commensurate with Infinite Love, would plan for eternity and infinity; hence a creation which is gradual, and continues in a perpetual preservation, and hence perfect order among all forces.

4. Infinite Power would actuate the purpose of Infinite Love in Infinite Wisdom. Hence inexhaustible suns, immeasurable growth, and a vast extent of worlds.

5. Infinite Love, being of its very nature fatherly, creation would continue through a vast process up to the production of man, the intelligent being on whom the Father might outpour his love and care.

6. For the fit habitation of man, a world perfectly adapted to him must be produced and prepared before his coming.

7. That the world might exist, Infinite Love, the only source of life, would go forth by means of Infinite Wisdom, and give existence to degrees of life below its own uncreatedness — these degrees descending to some limit or basis.

8. In these descending degrees, Infinite Love, being Life Itself, would give rise to substance corresponding with itself but distinct from it, being created and of a lower plane; hence would arise spiritual or supernatural substance, and hence matter.

9. The life of the Divine Love and Wisdom and Power, flowing down through all these degrees, would produce unity of life, so that the created objects of a lower degree would become the embodiments of those of the higher, and so that there would be produced an inter-correspondence of higher with lower, and *vice versa*, in general and in particular, and of all with the Infinite Source.

10. In the beginning mankind would be necessarily child-like and innocent, unacquainted with the arts, and unperverted in character; hence their life would be such as is

described in Scripture under the imagery of the story of Eden, such as is narrated in the earliest traditions of all peoples, and such as is deduced by the science of ethnology.* But they could not have been ferocious nor otherwise depraved, as is held by the evolutionists on a pure assumption based upon the present condition of the lowest races, and in defiance of the traditions of them all.

11. This being essential to their eternal manhood, they would be preserved in their free agency, even if, in the gradual development of their powers, they tended to separate their own wills from that of the Father, and to act in independence, though actually continually dependent; and hence, along with their progress in the arts, might come a decline of primitive innocence, as is set forth in Genesis under the imagery of the fall and expulsion from the garden, is declared in mythology and tradition, and is a theory in harmony with the deductions of ethnology.

12. In the earlier ages, men, being of innocent purposes, might learn from those in the higher planes of life the principles of true wisdom; but as men declined from this state, the Father, seeking for their sake to have men know the laws of life, would reveal them by means of some, by whom they would be taught to others, or written in their language. Hence would come the Scriptures which contain Divine laws, warnings, and promises, — in outward form adapted to the needs of the men to whom they were addressed, but inwardly containing the wisdom of God himself.

13. The Father, seeking to be made known to His children who had lost all true knowledge of Him, would come forth to view when the judgment which would then fall upon those who were in evil could no longer be delayed with safety to the rest, and the Infinite Man would be seen in finite form, setting forth the Divine Love and Wisdom in

* Dr. Winchell, in his work on the "Preadamites," says of pre-historic man, "Every evidence sustains us in the conclusion that he was not inferior in psychic endowments to the average man of the highest races, but was lacking in acquired skill." (p. 417.)

words and deeds. In order that at the same time those of perverted purposes might mercifully be brought into subjection, the assumed finite manhood would take the nature of the fallen condition of men, and would, through triumph over contesting influences, reduce to order the evil agencies. By this means, a new era characterized by the visibility of God, would be inaugurated, and a redemption would be wrought which would be rendered permanent if the assumed nature, having been purged of all weakness by triumph over temptation, should remain the eternal abode and manifestation of God. Hence the promise of an incarnation by means of a virgin mother, that the Son, though outwardly finite, might inmostly be the Infinite life; and hence the fulfilment of the plan, as recorded in the Gospels and manifested in human history.

14. Infinite Love would demand unlimited opportunity to bless; and hence the eternal life of all men, and their removal after a season from the earthly into the heavenly sphere, in which they advance forever in joy and usefulness, save that they who, by persistent opposition to the Lord, have destroyed in themselves all love of the good life of heaven, must be held in restraint, and cared for in such ways as are possible to them.

15. Infinite Love seeking a final completion of its plan, — the earths serving as seminaries for heaven, the race understanding the written Word and the experience of the past, and dwelling together in mutual usefulness and joy, — would fully reveal in due time the truth as to all points referred to in this summary.

This is the philosophy at present held by a few. Those at large who join the idea of God with their science are all in harmony with it in a general way. Those who deny God in their science are opposed to it. Their view, it would seem, must fail. Incident to the day of vast scientific discoveries, a plausible theory at first sight, it must yield to one more in accord with reason and with human knowledge and aspiration.

In this other view, the revelations of the Word join with those of Nature. In both Word and Work the Father speaks to his children. In both He teaches them of Infinite Love and Wisdom and Power. He always has been creating, for His Infinite Love had always an object, and time itself came in with the creation. He always has been giving new steps to the process of gradual devolopment, and men were made when the world was ready for them. To them He has committed not only the world, but all they can understand of the plan; and has invited them, not only to inhabit, but to investigate. If they err, they do it against their own reason and the facts before their eyes. That they will all some time come to the truth is promised in the saying, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." — Is. xi. 9.

THE LAYMAN'S WORK.*

The subject which I have been requested to present for our deliberation this afternoon is of the most direct consequence to every member of the Church. For upon a proper understanding and action in regard to it depend, not only the spiritual activity and extended usefulness to the community of the specific, organized Church in its various lesser and larger forms, but the development in each individual of the spiritual plane of being, which connects him with, and may prepare him for, a whole eternal life in some society of the spiritual world.

The Church is the Lord's Kingdom upon the earth: its membership, in the most extended sense, includes every individual, of whatever creed or nation, however enlightened or ignorant may be his condition, in whom there exists some knowledge and acknowledgment of a God, and some direct

* Read to the Massachusetts Association.

and conscientious effort to live and act in conformity with His supposed requirements.

According to the degree in which true doctrine concerning the Lord and His relation to His creatures enlightens the understanding, and induces a life in harmony with the purposes of creation, a life of love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor, does the individual man become a church in its least form, conjoined with the Lord and His heavenly kingdom by the good of love and faith, which is the essential life of heaven and of the Church.

Let us imagine such an individual man, to whom the wonders and delights of the full knowledge concerning the Lord, revealed in these latter days to His New Church, has come as the dawn of a bright and glorious morning, after a night of storm and darkness and doubt. The obscuring clouds of ignorance and prejudice, exhaled from dismal states of selfish and worldly loves, during centuries of false and poisonous teachings, are melting away under the Divine influence of the sun of heaven; into his heart and mind pours a flood of light and warmth and radiance, giving to his life a value, and bringing to his soul a delight in living that life, which seem almost to open to him a conscious heaven, because they *have* brought him into interior conjunction with the Lord, and with His heaven of angels. He sees clearly, for the first time, how infinitely the Divine Love and Wisdom have co-operated, in the gift of life and all its possibilities for endless happiness, to the beings made in the image and after the likeness of their Creator. For the first time, his Lord and Master stands to him in the relation of his nearest and truest friend, from whom no possible circumstance of his life need separate him, unless of his own accord he turn away; and his heart swells almost to anguish as he thinks, "What can I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me."

The answer to this question is the answer, also, to that which is to be opened for our present consideration —

What is the Layman's duty towards the Church?

Had any earthly friend conferred upon us benefits, needing only our own willing acceptance to render life a joy and a delight, he would be cold and hard of heart indeed who could fail to give to every hour and moment of that life an aspiration and effort of grateful remembrance and recompense. There cannot be one of us, who has not, at times, wondered and mourned over the hardness of his own heart, which fails to keep alive with its every pulsation, a conscious desire to live from the Lord's own love, and to act at every moment, in accordance with His desires and purposes. The time has been when such living in and from the Lord was possible, even in this world; and we know that it will come again in His own good time. We know, too, that for ourselves it is attainable, if we can but preserve the desire, and maintain the effort, until the needful struggle with evil is accomplished, and the Lord himself brings us into rest and peace in His heavenly, if not in His earthly, kingdom.

Is it too much, then, to say that it is the duty of the layman in the New Church to subordinate his life, in general, and in every particular, to the good of the Lord's Church; to so order his every action, in all his relations, to his family, to his business, to the community in which he lives, and to his country, that every duty shall be done with the conscious desire to fulfil the true requirements of the life of charity.

No one of us can fail to recognize this as a general principle of New Church life, because it is so plainly enforced in the doctrines of the Church; and, no doubt, we are mainly influenced by a general desire and intention to act in accordance with such a principle. That we may gain light and strength and mutual help in its application to particulars of life, is the object of such consideration of the question as we enter upon to-day.

Let us again endeavor to stand in the place of one to whom these truths have newly come as a fresh and life-giving revelation from the Lord, and to place ourselves under the influence of affections such as would govern him

in his entrance upon the new path of life now shown to him. Guided thoughtfully and conscientiously by his relations to the Lord and to His Church in his selection of an occupation or business, he gives his first consideration to the use to be attained, and willingly leaves the question of his own subsistence and prosperity in the hands of the Lord. Striving to shun every shadow of evil thinking or evil doing, as a sin against the Lord, he makes a faithful, sincere, and just performance of the work of his office or employment his first and daily duty; knowing that thus, at least, he is in the good of use continually.

As a member of the community at large, he holds himself ready to perform as faithfully, every duty which is necessary to the common welfare; and in all the ordinary relations of life, his constant effort is, to bring into direct active and practical operation, the new principles which have filled his soul with a sense of the joy of a life in harmony with the Lord's purposes and ends. Standing in such a relation to the Lord, and fulfilling the essentials of a life of charity, he may become in himself, a church in its least form; and if, in the Lord's Providence, he remains isolated from others of similar faith and life, he may still find spiritual consociation and support, while preparing for the fuller life of heaven; and his influence upon the community in which he lives, may avail much to strengthen the Church universal, even though the truths which give him light may fail to enlighten the minds of those around him.

When joined with others, however, in an effort, by mutual aid, to extend the knowledge of the Church to new minds, and to strengthen its life in themselves, for the sake of its general increase, a whole world of new duties crowd themselves upon his attention. Adhering still faithfully to the performance of the primary duties of his life, he will yet find, and take his delight and recreation in giving time to the performance of the various functions and uses which such new association brings into life. He will contribute, unsparingly, of the means provided him by the Lord,

towards the support of public worship, and every other needful means for increasing the benefits of consociation in the performance of the external uses of charity, and for extending the knowledge of the truths freely to be received, and as freely given forth to others.

He will enter, with his associates, into the consideration of every subject which concerns the welfare of the larger or smaller societies of the Church of which he is a member, carefully avoiding every expression and action which may hurt the feelings or injure the freedom of his brethren, but maintaining with conscientious adherence the principles of true charity and just dealing, which constitute the life of the Church.

If called upon to be, in any sense, the leader or officer of a society, he will give much heed to the subordination of self to the use to be performed, striving to think but little of personal dignity or honor, but rather to be humbly thankful to the Lord for his fuller opportunities for serving.

In his relation to the ministers whose office is to teach from the Word and the doctrines of the Church, and lead their flocks along the new path of life, he will carefully refrain from the assumption of such functions as belong to those set apart for their performance, but at the same time will hold himself in cheerful readiness to do any service that will lighten their labor or extend their field of influence.

Should increasing cares of business press heavily upon his time and strength, and threaten to interfere with his direct effort on behalf of the Church, he will carefully regard the Lord's providence in relation to the whole course of his life, striving to put aside natural ambition and desire for worldly prosperity, and only to do that which the Lord would seem to desire of him, as a means of use to others. In a word, his whole effort will be to make his own desires and wishes subordinate to the purposes of the Lord, and to the good of the Church; fully realizing that thus, and thus only, can his own true happiness be attained.

Do we see, in this presentation of the duties of the lay-

man, an ideal too high for present attainment? It may seem so, and yet, there must be many here present, who, looking back with me to the earlier, if not to the earliest days of the New Church in this community, will remember in our childhood, a sphere in which we dwelt together wherein the Church seemed first, and last, and all in all to the fathers and mothers who carefully strove to keep under the shadow of her wing, and to nourish from her beneficent bosom the children committed to their guidance, — the first generation, we may almost say, born of New-Church parentage.

As we look back to those early days of the Church, and let our thoughts dwell upon its life; of which we formed a part, and in the minds of its members an important part, but of whose influence we were quite unconscious, we can but lift up our hearts with the deepest thankfulness to the Lord for the earnest self-forgetfulness, in which he enabled our fathers and mothers to plant the foundations of His Church so deeply, that even the faithlessness, coldness, and indifference of which their descendants must be so often conscious, have failed to destroy its prosperity, or weaken its ability for usefulness.

As, one by one, these faithful servants of the Lord's earlier Church pass from our councils, and enter into the fuller usefulness for which they have so long made preparation, let us retain, as far as possible, not only the deeper spiritual influences which will continue as long as we remain faithful to the spirit in which they labored and may still be working with us; but for still potent help upon that lower plane upon which much of our work must yet be done, let us keep green and fresh, so long as we may, the memory of their self-sacrificing and earnest living, thankful to our Lord and Master for all that he enabled them to be and to do, and looking to Him for the help that can alone give us power to follow in their footsteps, and enter with them into His fuller life.

REMOVAL OF POLITICAL EVILS.

Although the Magazine has no preference between political parties, and such preference as its writers may have has no place in it, there may be a word upon politics both timely and appropriate to its pages.

The country is the neighbor more emphatically than an individual can be. Duties to the country rank next in importance with those to the church. So far as the form of government imposes political duties, they should be discharged with fidelity after honest inquiry and examination, but with entire charity for those who differ in opinion or action. The method and spirit in which the canvass for a national election is conducted are of greater importance than the ascendency of either contending party. Excessive heat in political contests tends to exaggerate evils and obscure good which really exist, blinding the judgment of the people upon the issues involved and impairing their capacity to perform wisely the duties which are devolved upon them.

The opinion is widely prevalent that the need of a reform in politics is greater now than ever before, but it is not certain that this opinion is correct. It is true there is great need of such reform now, but the need is not new; it is difficult to say of any historical period that the need of reform was less. It is not cause for discouragement that society is now permitted to see defects of which it did not know before. It is some evidence that the current is not really setting backwards, that much of what now gives alarm is found in methods and practices which have heretofore been thought innocent. It is the tendency of evil-doing to blunt perception of faults that have been known, rather than to make plain those which were hidden. The aspiration for better and purer politics which strengthens the consciousness of need of reform, gives the best assurance that reform will be effected.

The awakened perception of evil finds its first expression in the relatively easy method of condemning wrong in others. The defects of other men and other parties first occupy attention and enlist reformatory zeal. This may be better than indifference to wrong-doing, and may do something to prepare for better service, but in itself is very meagre progress. Measures of reform which deal principally with the faults of others will effect but little for the actual purification of public affairs.

There is no reason to believe that the people at large are any more ready to choose clean politics than the average of their public men. It is, indeed, probable that those chosen to administer public affairs are as much in advance of the moral tone of those who select them as the latter can be made willing to accept. To the extent which this is not true the form of government is a failure.

The roots of political depravity are with the people. The moral tone of a people is not an aggregate of distinct, isolated growths, but the result of a close interweaving of characters which act and react upon each other to form one whole that is too strong for any individual to entirely withstand. Each individual contributes something to corrupt politics when his own political action is anything short of integrity, and each does all that it is possible for him to do for pure politics when his own political action is pure.

The essential of all political corruption is the subordination of the public good to the gain of the individual; and however subtle the form of putting self first, every sacrifice of the public interest for self-advancement swells the tide which makes it more difficult for every other citizen to be honest with the public. The past cannot be reformed; what has been done selfishly must remain unchanged; but, in present and future action all that is seen to put self first may be resisted; methods and acts may be explored for traces of self-seeking that it may be more perfectly avoided. The only reform that is genuine, and which goes to the root of the evils to be removed, is that effected by each individual

resisting the evil of self-seeking in his own political action. When each individual is willing to forego personal ambition as the public interests require; is content that his advancement shall be determined absolutely and entirely by public considerations; if in public office, can bring every official act to the test of entire subordination of personal ends; if citizen, and voter only, never rewards a friend or punishes an enemy by his vote; never asks appointments or votes for himself or friends; when, if himself obliged to act upon his judgment rather than his wishes, he could not give what he asks; when by all tests that can be applied, each one can look his political action through and through, and discern no trace of self-seeking, the work is accomplished. When any individual has attained this he has made it easier for every other to resist political evil. However much it may seem to be so, the subordination of self in action relating to public affairs is never in fact a personal loss. The advancement of an individual beyond what will serve the public good, is as certainly a misfortune to the individual advanced as to the public. It is not difficult to see, intellectually, that this is true; but those who find it easy to bring the truth into all the minute things of political action, as well as into the larger matters for decision, probably find the resistance of other evils easy. The resistance is easy when accomplished.

THE USE AND IMPORTANCE OF DAILY READING THE WORD.*

In the Lord's Prayer we are taught to say, "Thy will be done, as in heaven so also upon the earth." And in the writings of the New Church we are shown somewhat in detail, how the Lord's will is done in heaven. The immediate and practical use of this knowledge is, plainly, to help

* Reported to the Massachusetts Association by the Committee on the Religious Education of Children and Youth.

us to better do the Lord's will here upon the earth. The life of the angels is laid open to us not to gratify our curiosity, nor merely to increase our range of thought and contemplation, but to help us in regulating our own lives and conduct by heavenly principles. They live as we all *should* live, and, if we are in the endeavor to shun our evils as sins against the Lord, their mode of life will afford us the most valuable and practical instruction as to what our lives should be. With this end in view, I will present a few extracts from Swedenborg with respect to the use of the Word in the heavens, and especially with children and youth there.

In the "Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture" we read as follows: —

"It has been unknown hitherto that the Word is in the heavens, nor could it be made known so long as the church did not know that angels and spirits are men similar to men in the world; and that they have similar attributes to men in every respect, with the only difference that they are spiritual, and that all things with them are from a spiritual origin; while men in the earth are natural, and all things with them are from a natural origin. So long as this knowledge lay concealed, it could not be known that the Word is also in the heavens, and that it is read by the angels there, and also by the spirits who are below the heavens." — n. 70.

"The angels themselves confess that all the wisdom they have is through the Word; for in proportion to their understanding of the Word they are in light. The light of heaven is Divine wisdom, which *appears* as light before their eyes. In the sacred place, where the copy of the Word is kept, there is a white and flaming light, exceeding every degree of light which is outside of it in heaven. The reason of this is that the Lord is the Word." — n. 73.

In the work on "Heaven and Hell" we are likewise taught —

"That the angels also have the Word, and that they read it equally as men on earth; from it also they derive their tenets of doctrine, and from it they preach." — n. 259.

Again, in the "Apocalypse Revealed," we are told that —

"The Lord's Prayer is daily read in heaven, as it is by men on earth. And the angels do not then think of God, the Father, because He is invisible; but they think of Him in His Divine Human, because in this He is visible. And in this Human He is not called by them Christ, but Lord; and thus the Lord is their Father in heaven." — n. 839.

In the "Spiritual Diary" we have a very pleasant account of the education and training of young girls in the other life. After describing their homes and their employments, the account proceeds as follows: —

"Garments they receive as a free gift, while they are ignorant of it, which they put on daily, and a better garment for festivals. They have also a little garden, and as long as they are virgins, there are only flowers there, but not fruits until they become wives. When they see spots on their clothes, it is a sign that they have thought evil, and done something which ought not to be done. The spots cannot be cleaned as from garments in the world. When they recollect what they have thought and done, — for they always then think about it, — they see their faults and their evils; and if they repent of them, the spots vanish of themselves from their garments. It is the same when they see any article of dress missing from their chambers. They then immediately know that they have done ill, wherefore they consider: and if they do not know [wherein they are at fault], there comes a wife who tells them. If they find a new article of dress in their rooms, they inmostly rejoice, because they know that they have done well. . . . They have the written Word and Psalms, and with them they attend preachings; they also read in them, and if they neglect to do so, either some garment is taken away, or their garden vanishes." — S. D. Maj. n. 5660–67.

"There were certain maidens who read daily in the Word: one was of a celestial genius, the other two intermediate between celestial and spiritual. The three had the Word; but when two of them did not read it for ten days, the books of the Word did not appear. They thought whence this was, and perceived that it was because they had not read it." — S. D. Maj. n. 5618.

We are also shown in the "Spiritual Diary" how the sim-

ple good are drawn to the Word in the other world, and how highly they value it, by the case of a good Gentile, who, when he heard some of the infinite and Divine things that are in the Word, "was so moved that his emotion was perceived internally;" and "he lamented interiorly that he had not known such things in the world, saying, at the same time, that he had thought that such things might be known and taught somewhere; and had he known where, he would have left his own country to find such a Word. It was then shown him "that he might still enjoy it in the state where he was, and be instructed in those things like infants who are in heaven." — S. D. Min. n. 4697.

From these extracts we learn: That the Word, in its external form, is found in heaven; that it is esteemed there above everything else; that portions of it are daily read there; that through it the angels derive all their wisdom; and that in the education of children and youth there for the angelic life the formation with them of the habit of reading the Word holds a very important place. The practical lesson to be gathered from this is so very plain that we hardly need to enlarge upon it. If the reading of the Word be so valued by the angels for themselves, and for the young entrusted to their tuition, *we* cannot too highly value the habit for ourselves, and for the children committed to our charge. If it be an important element of the heavenly life, it cannot be a less important element in the life that is preparatory for heaven.

The nature of the Word is now unfolded to us. We see it to be filled with "spirit and life." We are taught to hear in it the living voice of Him who knows no change, — who grows no better and wiser as the years go by, — because always infinitely good and infinitely wise. It is the Lord's Word, not because He *once* spake and dictated it, but because He speaks it now — to-day, and every day. Hence the reading of the Word is, — if it be properly done, — but listening to the present voice of the Lord. And the daily reading of the Word is hearing what the Lord would say to us to-day —

is, in an exalted sense, receiving from His hand our "daily bread." "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

A correct understanding of the nature of the Word also reveals it to be not only the medium of bringing *truth* to us, but of bringing us *good* likewise. We are to read it, therefore, not only for heavenly instruction, but that we may be brought under heavenly influences. When properly read, it brings us into association with the angels, and so into the sphere of the heavens.

Hence we are taught in the "Arcana Celestia," that —

"The Word was given that heaven and earth may be united, or angels united with men; on which account it was so written that by the angels it may be apprehended spiritually, while by man it is apprehended naturally, and that a holy influence may thus flow in through the angels, by which the union is effected." — n. 6333.

The Word is thus an ever-present and potent instrumentality for bringing the heavens near to us, and ourselves into a union of affection and thought with the angels. We are taught, moreover, that when the Word is devoutly read by men on earth, such reading serves an important use to the angels. For they draw near and read it in conjunction with men. And as they do so its internal meaning is laid very fully and delightfully open to their perceptions. Concerning this, we are instructed as follows in the "Arcana": —

"When the Word of the Lord is read by a man who loves the Word and lives in charity, and even by a man who in simplicity of heart believes what is written, and has formed no principles contrary to the truth of faith which is in the internal sense, it is displayed by the Lord to the angels in such beauty and in such pleasantness — with representatives also, and this with ineffable variety according to their every state in which they then are — that they perceive the least particulars, as it were, to be alive. This is the life that is in the Word, and from which the Word had birth when it was sent down from heaven. From this cause the Word of the Lord is such that, though it appears rude in the letter, yet within it are stored things spiritual and celestial, which

are manifested before good spirits and angels when it is read by man." — n. 1767.

And in the same work we have this further most interesting instruction respecting the effect upon the angels when the Word is read by children: —

"It may seem a paradox, but yet it is most true, that the angels better and more fully understand the internal sense of the Word when little boys and girls read it, than when it is read by adults who are not in the faith of charity. The reason stated to me is, that little children are in a state of mutual love and innocence, so that their vessels are extremely tender, almost celestial, and merely faculties of reception, which therefore are capable of being disposed by the Lord. . . . It is said, by the angels, that the Word of the Lord is a dead letter, but that in reading it is vivified by the Lord according to the capability of every one, and that it becomes living according to the life of charity and the state of innocence, and this with endless variety." — n. 1776.

In the light of these teachings it is hardly possible too highly to exalt the use and importance of daily reading the Word. If it be done devoutly and humbly it will bring to us the daily lesson which we need in pursuing the way of life, it will introduce us into daily intercourse with the noblest of associates, — even the angels of the heavens, — and it will enable us to perform for them a daily and grateful use.

And it certainly should be our effort to early and firmly fix this habit in the lives of our children. Beginning by tenderly and reverently *reading to them* at stated times, apart from the daily worship, those beautiful stories which are Divinely given for their especial use, let them as early as may be learn to read it daily by themselves. For, as an English writer has well remarked, if the child only listens to, or even reads, the Word in the daily worship of the family circle, there is danger that when he comes to leave that circle, he will leave the habit behind him also. It is well, then, that the habit should early be made a personal one.

And if this be done, if the Word be daily read in the spirit of the utterance, "I will *hear* what Jehovah God will speak," that reading will become to them a source of quiet and growing delight, and they will be able to say, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

THE NORSE MYTHOLOGY, IN THE YOUNGER EDDA.
II.

The principle of evil seems to be represented, in the Norse Mythology, by the wolf. The sun and moon are said to be pursued by wolves, which will some day catch and devour them. The time when this will take place is called Ragnarok, which seems to signify about the same as Doomsday. That wolves follow the sun and moon, Prof. Anderson tells us in a note, is a wide-spread, popular superstition; and that in Sweden, a parhelion is called *Solvarg*, or sun-wolf.

The mightiest of the wolf-race is called Moongarm. "He will devour the moon, and stain the heavens and all the sky with blood. Thereby, the sun will be darkened, the winds will grow wild and roar hither and thither." (p. 67). And, "at the end of the world," Surt, the giant, "will come and harry, conquer all the gods, and burn up the whole world with fire." (p. 57). But I wish to quote the more particular description of these things, from the chapter on Ragnarok: —

"First, there is a winter called the Fimbul-winter, when the snow drives from all quarters, the frosts are so severe, the winds so keen and piercing, that there is no joy in the sun. There are three such winters in succession, without any intervening summer. But before these, there are three other winters, during which great wars rage over all the world. Brothers slay each other for the sake of gain, and no one spares his father or mother, in that manslaughter and adultery. Thus says the Vala's prophecy: *

* In the "Elder Edda."

Brothers will fight together,
And become each other's bane;
Hard is the world,
Sensual sins grow huge.
There are axe-ages, sword-ages,
Shields are cleft in twain;
There are wind-ages, wolf-ages,
Ere the world falls dead.

Then happens what will seem a great miracle, that the wolf devours the sun, and this will seem a great loss. The other wolf will devour the moon, and this, too, will cause great mischief. The stars shall be hurled from heaven. Then it shall come to pass that the earth and the mountains will shake so violently that trees will be torn up by the roots, the mountains will topple down, and all bonds and fetters will be broken and snapped. The Fenris-wolf gets loose. The sea rushes over the earth, for the Midgard-serpent writhes in giant rage, and seeks to gain the land. The ship that is called *Naglfar* also becomes loose. It is made of the nails of dead men; wherefore, it is worth warning that when a man dies with unpared nails, he supplies a large amount of materials for the building of this ship, which both gods and men wish may be finished as late as possible."

It seems necessary to abridge the remainder of this description, in which it is told how the gods and heroes are called together to wage war against the giants, the wolf, and the serpent. Odin rides foremost and encounters the Fenris-wolf, who opens his mouth so wide that his upper jaw reaches to heaven. The wolf devours Odin, but is at length slain by Vidar, Odin's son. Thor gets great renown by slaying the Midgard-serpent, but dies himself afterwards from the poison of his venom. Loke fights with Heimdal, and they kill each other. And finally, Surt burns up the whole world.

The reader will scarcely need to be reminded of the coincidence of some particulars of this description with the Scripture account of the last day, but intermixed with other circumstances quite unique and peculiar. Some explanations are needed to make the whole more intelligible.

Thor and Heimdal are two of the most distinguished of

the gods. Loke is "one who is numbered among the '*asas*'" (gods), but he is "the originator of deceit, and the disgrace of all gods and men." Among his offspring were three which he had by a giantess in Jotunheim. The first, was the Fenris-wolf; the second, the Midgard-serpent; and the third, Hel (the goddess of death); Midgard (which seems to mean middle-yard, or middle-garden, for both yard and garden mean, in like manner, an enclosed place,) is the earth where men dwell. The Midgard-serpent is represented as lying in the seas, and there surrounding the whole earth. He is evidently a representative of the sensual principle, which, as it were, surrounds and encloses the more interior things in man.

Nothing could seem at first thought, more whimsical than the ship built of dead men's nails. Still it has a meaning. If we recollect that ships correspond to doctrine, according to Swedenborg, we shall at once see that the ship built of dead men's nails, is a doctrine of the most sensual and external kind, — one into which nothing of spiritual truth and life can possibly enter, — and therefore just such a doctrine as might be expected to get started in the last days of the consummated church. To pare the nails, then, will signify to reject the false appearances of sensual things, which ought to be done before death: hence the warning in the text.

That the gods are slain in the conflict, must be understood to signify the destruction of all good from God in man; for the gods, so called, were originally to be understood as personifications of divine and heavenly principles or qualities, or as manifestations of such things to men. Odin himself, though he is called the father of all the gods, and though it is said he made all things, and lives from everlasting to everlasting, is no exception. There is, behind all these representative personifications, the idea of the unknown, essential divinity, expressed by the name Fimbultyr, who is rarely mentioned, and "whom the Edda skald dared not name."

But, though the gods are slain in the conflict, their ene-

mies also perish. Afterwards, there is a renewal of all things. A new earth rises out of the sea, and produces spontaneous harvests. The gods live again, no longer thwarted by evil adversaries. The good among men are gathered into heaven, and the bad sent to hell till they are purged from their wickedness.

I append a few disconnected scraps further: —

"Then asked Ganglere, What is the path from earth to heaven? Har answered, laughing: 'Foolishly do you now ask. Have you not been told that the gods made a bridge from earth to heaven, which is called Bifrost? You must have seen it. It may be that you call it the rainbow. It has three colors, is very strong, and is made with more craft and skill than other structures.'" — p. 68.

Perhaps three colors, and no more, are mentioned to signify the three discrete degrees of ascent from the earthly to the heavenly state.

Under the second root of the ash Ygdrasil, the tree of heaven, is "the well of Mimer, wherein knowledge and wisdom are concealed." The owner of the well is Mimer, "who is full of wisdom, for he drinks from the well with the Giallar horn. Alfather once came there and asked for a drink from the well, but he did not get it before he left one of his eyes as a pledge. — p. 72.

Brage is the god of eloquence and poetry. Idun, his wife, "keeps those apples of which the gods eat when they grow old, and then they become young again, and so it will be until Ragnarok." — p. 88.

"All men who, since the beginning of the world, have fallen in battle, have come to Odin, in Valhal." . . . "But, however great may be the throng in Valhal, they will get plenty of flesh of the boar Sahrimmer. He is boiled every day, and is whole again in the evening." . . . But Odin "needs no food himself. Wine is to him both food and drink." — p. 104–5.

In Asgard (that is among the gods), Odin has twelve names, it is said, but elsewhere many more. More than two

hundred are given him in the Eddas. Most of these names have been given him, says the Edda, "for the reason that as there are many tongues in the world, so all peoples thought they ought to turn his name into their own tongue, in order that they might be able to worship him and pray to him each in its own language. Other causes of these names must be sought in his journeys, which are told of in old Sagas." (p. 82). A few of these names Prof. Anderson explains, as *Mjotud*, the creator; *Veratyr*, the Lord of Beings; *Herfather*, father of hosts; *Sigfather*, the father of victory, etc. But the meaning of many of them, says Prof. Anderson, "it is not easy to tell," though they no doubt once had a meaning, which is now lost. Snorre Sturleson, to whom is ascribed the principal authorship of the Younger Edda, was born in the year 1178, but parts of the work appeared to be by a different hand, and of a later date.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS.

Here kneeling, appealing,
Around me now the storm-clouds lower;
O guide me, O hide me,
Safe from the tempest's power.

So fearful, so tearful,
While waves and billows round me roll;
Night falling, appalling,
THOU only canst control.

Thus pleading, interceding,
My hands to Thee in prayer I hold;
O take me, Thine make me,
In sheltering arms enfold.

LITERATURE IN HEAVEN.

"We who are here [in an angelic society] are spiritual men, because substantial and not material; thence it is that all things that are in the natural world are here, in their perfection, even books and writings, and many more things."—Memorable Relation. T. C. R. n. 694.

Amongst the numerous teachings of the New Church, that hold out to us the prospect of rational and ennobling enjoyment in the other life, is the one that informs us of the existence of books and writings in heaven and the spiritual world. This fact Swedenborg teaches in various of his works, "True Christian Religion" and "Conjugial Love," for instance, as well as in "Heaven and Hell." In the latter, he devotes a chapter especially to this subject, giving a deeply interesting description of the different modes of writing practised in the different heavens.

"Since angels have speech," says he, "and their speech is composed of words, it follows that they have writings also, and that they express the sentiments of their minds by writing as well as by speaking. There have sometimes been sent to me papers covered with writing exactly like papers written by hand, and others like papers that have been printed in the world. I could also read them in the same manner; but I was not permitted to draw from them more than a sentence or two; the reason of which was because it is not according to Divine order for a man to be instructed from heaven by other writings but only by the Word, because it is only by the Word that communication and conjunction are effected between heaven and the world, thus between the Lord and man." . . .

"That there should be writings in heaven was provided by the Lord for the sake of the Word. The Word in its essence is the Divine Truth from which all the heavenly wisdom enjoyed by men and by angels is derived. . . . It is accommodated both to the wisdom proper to angels and to the intelligence enjoyed by men. Thence it is that the Word is possessed also by angels and that

they read it just as men do on earth. From it, likewise, their tenets of doctrine are deduced, and from it their sermons are composed."—H. & H. n. 258, 259.

"A copy of the Word, written by angels inspired by the Lord, is preserved amongst every larger society, in its sacred repository, lest the Word as to some point should in other places be altered."—T. C. R. n. 241.

"The wonderful things which exist in the spiritual world from the Word are many. The Word itself in the inmost recesses of the temples there shines before the eyes of the angels like a great star and sometimes like the sun, and also from the bright radiance round about it there appear, as it were, most beautiful rainbows. This happens as soon as the sacred recess is opened."—T. C. R. n. 209.

But though the Lord provided that there should be writings in heaven for the sake of the Word, and though the angels derive all their wisdom from this source, yet they have also numerous other books and writings of their own composition, as much excelling ours, both in number and quality, as the heavenly life in general excels the earthly.

"The writing in the inmost heaven," says Swedenborg, "consists of various inflected and circumflected forms, and those inflections and circumflexions are disposed according to the form of heaven. By these the angels express the arcana of their wisdom, including many that cannot be vocally uttered. . . . This sort of writing, by characters of heavenly form, is in use in the inmost heaven, the inhabitants of which in wisdom excel all others. By those characters they express the affections from which their thoughts flow and follow in order according to the subject under consideration. On this account, those writings involve arcana which no thought can exhaust. It has also been granted me to see such writings. But in the inferior heavens such writings as these do not exist. The writings in these heavens are like those in the world, formed with similar letters; yet even these are not intelligible to man, being in the angelic tongue, which is of such a nature as to have nothing in common with human languages, for by the vowels they express affections, by the consonants the ideas of thought proceeding from those affections, and by the words composed of both, the meaning of the subject under

consideration. This kind of writing also includes in a few words more than a man can express in several pages."—H. & H. n. 260, 261.

The great superiority of spiritual thought and language, and consequently of spiritual writing, over natural, is likewise set forth in a Memorable Relation in "True Christian Religion," (n. 280.) After testing this well in the spiritual world by comparisons which they were able to make through the medium of Swedenborg, the wise one and the bystanders who made the test concluded that —

"Spiritual ideas were supernatural, inexpressible, ineffable, and incomprehensible to the natural man, and because they are so supereminent, they said that spiritual ideas or thoughts in respect to natural were ideas of ideas, or thoughts of thoughts, and that by them, therefore, were expressed qualities of qualities, and affections of affections. Consequently that spiritual thoughts were the beginnings and origins of natural thoughts. . . . I see this because I have perceived that one natural idea is the continent of many spiritual ideas, and that one spiritual idea is the continent of many celestial ideas. From this also follows this consequence, that a thing divided does not become more and more simple, but more and more multiple, because it draws nearer and nearer to the Infinite in whom are all things infinitely."—T. C. R. n. 280.

Bearing these sublime statements in mind, we may be enabled to form some slight idea of the surpassing excellence and profundity of books produced in the atmosphere of heaven, in which every idea or truth, which we are capable of apprehending here, unfolds itself with constantly increasing myriads of particulars beyond our comprehension here, and which in the third heaven unfolds itself with an altogether ineffable fulness and splendor and depth to the celestial angels, "as it draws nearer and nearer to the Infinite." It can scarcely enter into the heart of men to conceive what glorious, lofty, and thrilling writings are brought forth under such auspices. Suffice it to say, we

have the words of angels to certify that in heaven they have "books and writings in their perfection."—T. C. R. n. 694. C. L. n. 207.

In the Relation in which the above quoted statement in reference to books occurs, Swedenborg tells us of a society of Greek sages and their followers, amongst whom were introduced three new comers to the spiritual world, in order that they might be instructed in the nature of heavenly life, its pursuits, etc. At first they were introduced into an auditory where they received considerable instruction, and then an elder in the society told them:—

"'Because you are as yet fresh in this world, if it be your good pleasure, follow me into our city and we will show you everything.' And they went out of the auditory, and some of the elders also accompanied them; and first they went into a large library which was distinguished into smaller ones according to the sciences. The three new comers on seeing so many books were astonished, and said, 'Are there books, too, in this world? Whence are the parchment and paper? Whence the pens and ink?' To this the elders replied, 'We perceive that you believed in the former world, that this world was empty because spiritual; and that you believed this is because you cherished an idea of the spiritual abstracted from the material; and what is abstracted from the material appeared to you as nothing; thus as empty, when yet there is here a plenty of all things. All things here are *substantial* and not material, and material things derive their origin from substantial things. We who are here are spiritual men, because substantial and not material. Thence it is that all the things that are in the natural world are here in their perfection; even books and writings and many more things.' The three new comers, when they heard things *Substantial* named, thought that it was so both because they saw written books, and because they heard it said that matter was originally from substance. That they might be still more confirmed concerning this, they were brought to the abodes of the Scribes, who were transcribing copies of what had been written by the wise men of the city, and they inspected the writing, and wondered that it should be so neat and handsome."—T. C. R. n. 694.

Swedenborg also represents members of this same society, on a certain occasion, as—

"Going out of the city and from the vicinity, some having laurels upon their heads, some holding palms in their hands, some with books under their arms, and some with pens under the hair of the left temple. We joined them and went up together with them, and behold, upon the hill an octagonal palace which they called the Palladium, and we entered and behold there eight hexangular apartments in each of which there was a library and also a table, at which the laurelled ones sat down."—T. C. R. n. 692.

This society consisted of certain of the ancient Greek sages, such as Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristippus, and Xenophon, with their disciples and scholars, who dwelt in and around a city they called Athenæum, on one side of which were two hills which they called Parnassium and Heliconæum. (T. C. R. n. 692.) Every particular in the three Relations which Swedenborg gives, in reference to this society, afford a convincing proof of the fact that after the lapse of ages, individuals and races, in the other life, retain their distinctive characteristics, for here we have a glimpse of the Greek sages many centuries after their departure from earth, and we find they have just the same intellectual tastes and pursuits as before, only enlarged and elevated. We find them still discoursing on recondite themes, still writing books. But there is nothing surprising in this; for the qualities that make a truly fine author, the insight into the interior wonder, beauty, and significance of things, the yearning after the highest wisdom and beauty, the power to seize the everlastingly human amid the ever-shifting play of circumstance: all these things belong to the rational and spiritual mind, and the passing away of natural life can have no other effect on them than to give them a fuller scope for expansion in that glorious atmosphere that is illuminated with the light of life.

It is rational, then, to suppose, and indeed it follows from Swedenborg's teachings, that authorship, when ingrained in

the life's love as well as in the intellectual life, must needs be continued in the other world, and there blossom and fructify with an abundance of richness and beauty of which its beginning on earth can give us only the most shadowy type. This, we believe, will assuredly be the case with men of literary genius, whose moral qualities are in harmony with their intellectual ones, and who on earth pursue their beautiful calling in the love and furtherance of what is good and true. Does it not seem a rational, nay, an inevitable conclusion that the man thus constituted will continue to exercise his glorious gift in the other world, enlarged, exalted, purified and beautified to such a degree as transcends our comprehension and even our imagination? Let us try to picture to ourselves, for instance, what the poetic gift would be under those circumstances—that gift, which even in this world, amid all the shadows, obstructions, and limitations of earth life, shines forth with something like a heavenly refulgence, and, by its ennobling and uplifting influences, its thrilling testimony to the existence of a supernal loveliness, helps to keep the world from becoming buried in the dust of materialism. It is insight that makes the poet, together with the faculty of embodying in beautiful forms the visions that his insight enables him to see. But his clearest insight in this life, his finest perception of the wonder and loveliness below the surface will be but "seeing through a glass darkly," compared to his power of exercising these faculties in the other life, and his capacity there for embodying his thoughts in exquisite forms, so immensely are all our faculties exalted and augmented in that world. We gather from Swedenborg that the speech of the angels is metrical:—

"What is stupendous and incredible," says he, "in angelic discourse, the form of heaven is represented; hence in all angelic discourse, there is a melodious concert as of songs, which in every termination closes in a monosyllable, thus in a one; and I have been told that the reason of this is because each and every thing in heaven has reference to one God, thus to its end. From these considerations, also, it might be manifest that the all of thought

and of discourse thence derived flows in through heaven from the Lord, and that hence is such a melodious concert in discourse, closing in a one."—A. C. n. 7191.

From this statement we may see whence it is that poets derive their harmonious numbers, and that the metrical form of their writings is consonant with the form and order of heaven. Indeed, everything that is grand or lovely in literature and art, on earth, flows down from the Lord through the heavenly societies, and if these things did not first take shape there, they could not do so here; for that is the world of causes, and the dwellers there, as Swedenborg expresses it, "are in principles, whilst we are in derivatives."

Not only does Swedenborg teach us that books are to be found abundantly in heaven, but also in the intermediate state called the world of spirits. One curious fact in reference to books in that world, is, that any work written here is capable of being reproduced there from the memory of the author, and I judge that many of the books seen there are of this nature. Swedenborg says in his treatise on the world of spirits:—

"I saw some books with writings in them such as exist in the world, and I was informed that they were taken from the memory of their authors, and that not a single word was wanting that was contained in those books as written by those persons in the world."—H. & H. n. 463.

In another of his works ("Conjugial Love," n. 175), he speaks of the writings of certain authoresses being examined in the light of the spiritual world, where it was shown that, though written with grace and genius, they were devoid of interior rationality and wisdom. It is to be clearly inferred that books thus reproduced in the spiritual world, have only a transient existence, disappearing when the natural memory of the authors becomes quiescent, as is always the case with everyone before he leaves the world of spirits for his final abode.

But in addition to writings reproduced from the memory

of the authors, Swedenborg also gives us a good many instances of persons continuing to write in the world of spirits, in confirmation of some favorite dogma or tenet to which their minds continue as obstinately bent as when they were in the natural world. For instances of this kind we refer the reader to "The True Christian Religion," (n. 161, 505), and to "Conjugial Love," (n. 380.)

Swedenborg also mentions seeing some of his own works in the spiritual world; the "Arcana Cœlestia," for instance, and his work on the "Divine Love and Wisdom," and the "Divine Providence." After conversing with some persons in the world of spirits:—

"As I was retiring," he says, "I saw a table of cedar wood on which there was a book, under a green olive tree, whose trunk was entwined about with a vine. I viewed it attentively, and behold it was a book which I had written entitled "Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom," and also concerning the Divine Providence, and I said, 'In that book it is fully shown that man is an organ recipient of life, and not life.'"—A. R. n. 875.

In another place (T. C. R. n. 112) he tells us of an altercation taking place in the world of spirits over a little treatise of his entitled, "A Brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church."

But the wondrous books that are written in heaven! Would that Swedenborg might have given us some further inkling into their contents! But this was not to be. He could give us only a slight, general idea of them for the reason that he was not permitted to draw from them more than a sentence or two, it being contrary to Divine order for a man to be instructed from heaven by other writings than the Word. Therefore it was not allowable for him, whilst performing his peculiar mission, to draw from angelic writings more than a sentence or two, so he only tells us enough to set us to wondering and dreaming over these heavenly writings, which, he declares, "involve arcana which no thought can exhaust."—H. & H. n. 261.

What do they treat of, we wonder? The angels who penned them have left far behind them all the transient concerns that fill up so many of our books; they are no longer clogged with the frailties and the cares of the body; they no longer see through a glass darkly; their rational and spiritual faculties, no longer fettered by the limitations of natural life, are able to expand illimitably in the glorious atmosphere of heaven, the light of which is from the Divine Wisdom. Then how far, how immeasurably far must they soar beyond our best and noblest writers on earth!

But what do they write about, in these wondrous books? The angelic discourses which Swedenborg records may assist us somewhat in conjecturing what the angels would be likely to write about. Perhaps, choosing some verse or some clause of the Word, they study its inner meaning and set forth some of its thousand-fold aspects; for this is a study which even the loftiest angelic intelligence can never exhaust, nor fathom to eternity; every clause in the Divine Word being like a gate that opens into glorious and illimitable fields. Perhaps they describe deep, and wonderful, and beautiful spiritual experiences and progressions, setting forth some of the marvellous arcana of regeneration; the most general of which, says Swedenborg, can never be exhausted to eternity.

Doubtless they write myriads of profound volumes on the soul, its nature and its laws, about which they are constantly making fresh and wonderful discoveries in proportion as they become more and more perfected in wisdom and intelligence; for throughout eternity we will more and more realize the truth of the Psalmist's declaration that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made," and whilst this is true, even of our physical being, it is a thousand times more so of our spiritual being; and our introduction into the spiritual world and even into heaven, so far from making the soul, its nature and its laws, seem simple to us, will, a million-fold enhance their marvels, and increase our perceptions of the numberless particulars involved in them, according to what

Swedenborg says, that "a thing becomes more and more multiple as it draws nearer and nearer to the Infinite."

Perhaps the angels write of the Divine trinity of Love, Wisdom, and Use, of the three-fold order of our being thence originating; of the marriage of Good and Truth, of the conjunction of the spiritual and natural worlds, of the form of order, the Divine Human Form, according to which all humanity both individually and collectively is organized. Doubtless they write (as they discourse) on the innumerable and ineffable arcana of conjugial love, a subject which forever and forever unfolds new worlds of wondrous loveliness and joy, and of deep, interior wisdom; and which, above all other themes, "attracts all minds to itself by a certain secret power." (C. L. n. 316.) We might gather some dim idea of how they might write on this subject from their discourses in regard to it, as recorded by Swedenborg in his work on "Conjugial Love"; a work reflecting the order and spirit of heaven in its profound wisdom, its crystalline purity, and, in some parts, its absolute splendor of beauty. As we read it, we seem to be conscious of the spiritual presence of "a flamy light, the light of conjugial love, filling the house with splendor, and our hearts with pleasantness," such a light as Swedenborg says appeared in a palace in the spiritual world after an orator had delivered a wise discourse on the origin of beauty.—C. L. n. 384.

Then, perhaps, the angels write of the multiform affections of spiritual love, various as the innumerable societies of heaven, and each one with an indefinite number of branches growing out from it as from a fruitful vine. But we lose ourselves in an illimitable forest, or upon a fathomless ocean when we try to conjecture further the subjects on which the angels write. We may rest assured that every grand, lovely, holy, and ennobling theme that can tend to the strengthening and uplifting of the spiritual and the intellectual life, or to the furtherance of any heavenly use is handled by angelic authors with ineffable wisdom, beauty, and sublimity; and if, even with our dim vision and narrow

knowledge, such a host of subjects suggest themselves that would be fit themes for an angel's pen, we may be assured that a million-fold more present themselves to the clearer vision of the angels, and every truth connected with every subject has an endless capacity for outgrowth and expansion, because of its Infinite Origin.

We may form some faint idea of the writings in the first heaven, although they are immeasurably superior to any we have here, and the best and noblest of ours compared with theirs are but like a tiny rill beside a mighty river; but there is as much difference between the writings of the second and third heaven and the first one, as between the writings of the latter and those on earth, so glorious is the light of wisdom in which the superior angels dwell, and so much the more multiple do every truth, and idea, and perception become as they draw nearer and nearer to the Infinite. Therefore, our writings, compared with the ineffable ones of the angels who stand nearest to the eternal throne, scarcely sustain the relation of a little rill to the ocean.

Not only do the angels possess immense advantages over writers on earth in their immeasurably superior enlightenment, and illimitable scope for the expansion of their intellectual and rational faculties, but they also possess a vast advantage in their language, which in force, depth, beauty, and significance, as far surpasses ours as the immortal soul surpasses the frail, perishing body. Spiritual language expresses more in one word than ours does in a thousand, and it doubtless affords the angels numberless exquisitely fine distinctions and subtle shades of meaning which the gross tongues of earth are not capable of conveying; and when we take, in connection with this idea, the fact that the intellectual, rational, and perceptive faculties are all as vastly exalted above what they are in the life of the body as angelic speech is above human, we may form some idea of the limitless possibilities of literature under such circumstances; and to such of us as find literature a solace, delight, and recreation in our earth life, it is a joyful

thing to know that in the other life where every pure and rational enjoyment we have known here awaits us, only elevated and sublimated as our own faculties shall be, we will have the delight of a grand and beautiful literature, more lovely, profound, and noble than any thing we can even imagine now.

What wondrous, lofty, thrilling measures must the poet sing; to what sublime, luminous, and profound disquisitions must the theologian, the psychologist, the metaphysician, the philosopher, give birth, in the great expansion and illumination of all their mental faculties in that perfect atmosphere whose light is the Divine Wisdom, and whose warmth is the vital warmth of real, essential Life! What grand and lovely fields of literature, of whose most general scope we cannot now form an idea, do they, perchance, cultivate in the heavenly societies! At all events, in the absence of more precise knowledge on the subject, we may rest on the delightful assertion of the angel who declared that in the other life they had books and writings *in perfection*.

THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION.

The religion of the ancient Egyptians is one which is known to us historically only through the most meagre and imperfect sources. Left, as we are, without a vestige of it remaining, except in a few of its influences, and even these denied by many, we are thrown entirely upon research among the relics of times extending as far back as 3000 B. C.

We all know, that our most important informants here are the tombs of the Egyptian Kings, the Pyramids, those great abodes of the dead, built by the forced labor of many thousands, and bearing such emphatic witness to the religious nature of the ancient Egyptians. Their palaces went

to ruin while the temples and tombs have stood during the lapse of more than four thousand years. It is owing to the religious fervor of these men that their tombs, with the papyri found in them, have been of the greatest value to us in our search after some knowledge of their rites of worship and their belief. The walls of the chambers in these tombs, and the sarcophagi are completely covered with inscriptions, recounting the exploits of the kings, in war and in peace, the nations they conquered, and the edifices they built, — and all this done for a purely religious purpose, the glorification of the gods.

One, who has seen these inscriptions, might rightly ask, What meaning such a mass of queer figures can convey to us. They conveyed nothing to us until the discovery of "The Rosetta Stone," which is the key to the whole. This stone — a block of basalt, three feet by two and a half — was erected in honor of Ptolemy Epiphanes, 193 B.C., and contains the text in three different characters: one the Hieroglyphics and one Greek. After this, it was merely a matter of time and labor to decipher the writing, to throw open to us the hieroglyphic inscriptions of tombs and coffins, and, in that way, to give us a history of the Egyptian kings, their priests, and their religion from the earliest times. Of course there are many interpreters and many interpretations, but upon the substance they all agree. The invention of these characters, made up, as they are, of figures of man, beast, and bird, has been ascribed to a king who lived two thousand, or, as some say, three or four thousand years before Christ. What the reason was, for a king's selecting these means of writing in preference to an already established and much simpler alphabet, is not given. The explanation which is familiar to students of Swedenborg, I will recall.

The people of the Most Ancient Church, as well as those of the first ages of the Ancient Church, understood the doctrine of correspondences, and hence figured forth their ideas in such living symbols as these hieroglyphics. During the

latter part of the Ancient Church, that is, about the time of the earliest records we have of these characters, the people had become so evil, that they had lost all knowledge of this doctrine of correspondences; but the characters remained, with their meanings, however, greatly twisted and narrowed. Nevertheless, their specialized sense has furnished us with about all we know of ancient Egpyt and her religion.

Some of these writings were her religious books, which were very numerous, as we see from those that have been recovered from the tombs, some of them written four thousand years ago. That others than those we have, existed, is proved from the quotations, painted and cut upon the walls of the chambers of the dead. Among them are: "The Book of the Dead," "Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys," "The Book of that which is in Tuat," and "The Book of the Glorifying Osiris;" but as yet we have heard nothing of Isis and Osiris.

The Egyptians, like all peoples who personify the natural and mental world to make their gods, had deities almost innumerable, some greater, some less, all going to form the subject of their religious thought and worship. The discussion about Egyptian mono-theism will seem to almost any reader of the subject rather superfluous, I think; and he will be apt to hasten to the conclusion of Renouf himself, that whatever the religion once was, during historical times, it was beyond a doubt poly-theistic.

The gods were divided into three orders: Of the first, there were Ammon, the concealed god; then Kneph, the creative power; Khem, the generative power, the feminine creative principle of Nature in Neth, and the living stimulus of all growth in Ra or the sun. This first order of the gods was for the initiated, and taught them the unity, spirituality, and the creative power of God. This fact is used as an argument for mono-theism, — a mono-theism that was taught to the initiated only, leaving the grosser conceptions to the vulgar mind; — but we will return to this later.

The religion of the common people was concerned with

the third order of the gods, the circle of Isis and Osiris, who were nearer their level, more natural and personal. The need of such an order is easily explained by the fact, that there were two races in Egypt, one Asiatic and one African. By this, also, the explanation of many of the incongruities arising from two sets of gods — the third set was merely an amalgamation of the other two — is clearly seen. Isis and Osiris head the order of the common people. The myth of this husband and wife in all its details, and the many interpretations offered, are very complex. By all it is agreed to be symbolical, whether it be, as is variously affirmed, geographical, astronomical, or philosophical. This only myth of the Egyptians is as follows: —

Isis, the female principle of nature, is married to Osiris, the creative power, that tames the world by oratory, poetry, and music. Through Typhon, the destructive element, Osiris is shut up in an ark and thrown into the Nile. Isis, after seeking him, by directing her inquiries to little children, who were thence held to have the faculty of divination, finds him closed up in a tree. She takes him out. While weeping over his body, she is seen by Typhon, who was out hunting by moonlight. He seizes Osiris, and tears him to pieces, and scatters his limbs about him. Isis secures and buries them in different places, by the aid of Horus her son, the mediator between creation and destruction. Horus finally slays Typhon.

Some say that these facts refer to Osiris as the Nile, which seems to have represented heaven, and to Isis as the earth; but the more probable explanation is Mr. Clarke's: that they represent an allegory of the struggles, sorrows, and self-recovery of the human soul.

As regards another feature, and one of the most prominent, of this strange people's worship, I will quote Mr. Clarke; he has spoken of the religion of India: —

"The religion of Egypt stands at the opposite pole of thought as its antagonist. Instead of spirit, it accepts body; instead of unity, variety; instead of substance, form. It is a physical reaction from Brahmanism."

We must understand this as applying only to the worship of the people as a mass; of whom, it is truly said, that they had degenerated into the basest kind of idolatry — animal worship. The various animals they chose as sacred, to put the most favorable construction upon it, were supposed to be the residences of the gods; and, if not in some cases identified with them, yet they were at least held as sacred after the departure of the gods from their bodies.

Isis had as her representative the cow, and Osiris the well-known Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, whose tombs appear to have been some of the most magnificent of their kind. That the Egyptians did not venerate all animals, is shown by their love for hunting and fishing; but it is repellent enough for us to know that they conceived their gods as willing to inhabit the bodies of dogs, wolves, birds, and crocodiles, which have been found, embalmed and deposited in their tombs.

There are various explanations given of this worship, such as that some of the lower orders were made sacred to insure their unwholesome meat from being eaten; but this is truly a trifling explanation for a firm religious belief. Indeed no explanation is so satisfactory as that given us by revelation, found throughout Swedenborg's works. He taught, as I have mentioned above, that the Most Ancient and Ancient Churches, in which were included Egypt and large portions of Asia, knew the doctrine of correspondences, whereby we learn that each object of this natural world has its correspondence in the world above. In the decline of the Ancient Church, as this doctrine was lost, the true meaning of these symbols of the mind, which they had known, were forgotten, and only the fact that they were connected with the qualities of the higher world, of goodness and truth, were remembered: hence the reverence was transferred from the quality to its representative, and as a result came idol and animal-worship.

On this same basis rests the foundation of the mythology of all nations, which at first rightly conceived the powers dis-

played in nature and in the mind, as represented by the external world, as the sun, moon, etc.; but finally forgot the connection between the two, and transferred their worship from the powers to their symbols, their personification.

The division of caste in Egypt was not nearly so strict as has been supposed. There were always open to the educated of any class the honorable positions of the others, whether civil, military, or sacerdotal. Even intermarriage between the classes was allowed. The priests, however, being, as is usual where religion is such a powerful factor, the superior intellects of the nation, generally handed their offices down to their sons. The lowest classes in such a civilization, of course, found it hard to rise; but among the soldiers, scribes and priests there was always a chance for advancement. Some of the sacred offices, indeed, required men of but little education, such as the keeping of the robes, of the sacred animals, and the examining of the victims, but not so the higher positions of scribe, judge, prophet, and pontiff or chief priest.

The duties of the priests consisted in superintending funerals, processions and sacrifices, and in offering prayers for the dead. For their duties they had to be initiated into the greater and the lesser mysteries. Their sacrifices were what we are familiar with from Greece, the killing of victims, and the pouring of libations; their processions, the carrying of arks, shrines and images of the gods. The funeral ceremonies were of the most imposing character: — first, the embalming of the body, and the mourning; then, the dramatic representation of the trial of the soul before Osiris. In this scene Typhon accuses the dead man, intercessors plead for him, and finally his conduct is placed in one scale-pan, and in the other an image of truth; all this being an oft-repeated subject of inscription.

The religious beliefs of this nation of ancient civilization, as indeed of most ancient religions, must be most astonishing unless we preconceive some revealed and formerly acknowledged truth to have been at their foundations. The

Buddhism of five hundred years before Christ contained many of the most vital truths of Christianity. The religion of "The Book of the Dead" is not far behind it.

In whatever way we look at this subject, these facts are apparent: that all through the religion of the Egyptians there runs a thread of truth; that their higher orders were feebly holding on to a nearly extinct idea of mono-theism; that spirituality and unity had well nigh succumbed to materialism and variety; that many truths formerly seen were fading from their minds, and others becoming twisted into abnormal shapes.

Now, what explains this? We return to Swedenborg: —

> These men being immediate descendants of the Ancient Church had a few of the truths of this church yet in their minds. These truths were still to be traced in many of their books, and were undoubtedly practised by some, however imperfectly. They became more and more obscured, though, till, at the time of Christ, there was little of the former religion left, other beliefs having superseded them.

To show the strength of their religious feelings, I will quote from "The Book of the Dead." A tablet thus describes the deceased: —

> "I was just and true, without malice, placing God in my heart, and quick in discerning his will. I have come to the city of those who dwell in eternity. I have done good upon earth. . . . I have approved of nothing base, but have taken pleasure in speaking the truth. . . ."

Charity was a virtue held in high esteem. The following praises are put into the mouth of the departed one: —

> "Not a little child did I injure. Not a widow did I oppress. Not a herdsman did I ill-treat. There was no beggar in my days; no one starved in my time; and when years of famine came I ploughed all the lands of the province to its northern and southern boundaries, feeding its inhabitants and providing their food."

The Egyptians had a peculiarly vivid conception of the

future life. In their belief, a soul was destined to live three thousand years after the body's death and before the entrance into heaven, either in the bodies of animals or in its own, if that was kept from decay by being embalmed. Then the soul went to an eternal and happy rest.

This is an inscription over a tomb: —

"A royal table of propitiation grant Anubis who dwells within the divine house. May sepulture be granted in the other life .... in the land of the ancient, the good, and the great, to him who is faithful to the great God. May he advance upon the blissful paths upon which those advance who are faithful to the great God."

Then, after asking that he may be granted the goods of this life: —

"May he come forth as a living soul, to be glorified among the favored ones in the presence of Un-eper, to breathe the delicious breezes of the north wind, and to drink from the depth of the river."

Filial duty was enjoined upon all. Rameses II. King of Egypt, says: —

"The most beautiful thing to behold, the best thing to hear, is a child with a thankful breast, whose heart beats for his father. I will cause them to talk forever of his son, who had awakened his name to life."

Great stress was thus laid upon sons to hold their father's name in honor, and to sacrifice and pray for their welfare.

Besides these, I wish to ask your attention to a few beautiful words from a king's son, who wrote four thousand years ago: —

"Man's heart rules the man." "The bad man's life is what the wise man knows to be death." "What we say in secret is known to Him who made our interior nature." "He who made is present with us, though alone."

Some of these peculiarities of belief were that there existed in one man, a soul, body, ka or genius, and a shadow that was restored to him in after life, and that dreams were prophetic. Though this last can hardly be called a peculiarity, as it was possessed by many ancient peoples, and from the Bible we know that dreams were often of this nature. On earth they believed a man had a soul and body, and an attendant spirit or ka, which we can easily understand. In after life his soul clothed itself in a new body with the senses of the natural body.

It can be easily seen now, that with these men their religion was all in all. Their every deed was done under the protection of deities and for their sakes. In all the papyri left us, whether they speak of the wonderful astronomical knowledge, accredited to them by all, or of mathematics, or navigation, they are all religious in themselves, and written for the honor of the gods. "Literature and science were branches of theology. Art labored in its service." Much time and energy were devoted to the celebration of feasts and festivals, which were as numerous as the gods themselves.

Before closing, I wish to speak of the word "nutar," which we have often used. We translated it God. No one can have failed to notice its frequency, and the apparent worship of unity of power which it implies. Renouf, who has made a special study of it, affirms that it cannot be used as a proper name, but means simply "power." It is applied indiscriminately to all the gods as they are manifestations of power. Nevertheless, this does not detract from the real sanctity of their petitions, addressed like our own to a Higher Power, which we feel and recognize as governing our lives in their every act.

SWEDENBORG STUDIES.

I. JOHN CALVIN. A RECONCILIATION OF SWEDENBORG'S STATEMENTS.

In the "Continuation concerning the Last Judgment," Swedenborg says:—

"I have spoken, but only once, with Calvin; he was in a society of heaven which is seen in front above the head; and he said that he had not agreed with Luther and Melancthon concerning faith alone, since in the Word works are so often mentioned, and it is commanded to do them, and that therefore faith and works are to be conjoined. That Calvin was accepted in his society, because he was well-behaved [probus] and did not make disturbance, I heard from a governor of that society."—n. 54.

A similar statement is made elsewhere. But in the "True Christian Religion," (n .798), we are told that after the Last Judgment was, at least in part, accomplished, Calvin "sought here and there for an asylum, and was at last received into a certain society where they were merely simple-minded, with some among them who were religious also; and when he saw that they knew nothing about predestination, and were not able to understand anything about it, he betook himself to one corner of the society, and there he concealed himself for a long time; nor did he open his mouth on any church matter." But after other changes, he betook himself to an evil life, and then utterly denied the Divinity of the Lord's Human, and then "all the servants of the Lord withdrew from him, and he betook himself hastily to a way leading to the cave where they were who have confirmed in themselves the execrable dogma of predestination. I afterwards conversed with some of those imprisoned in that cave," Swedenborg adds, "and inquired into their lot. They said that they were compelled to labor for food, that all were enemies of each other, that each sought an occasion to do evil to another, and that they also did it whenever they found any trifling cause, and that this was the enjoyment of their lives."

Of course it is difficult to see how a well-behaved man, once in heaven, could come to such a lot. Swedenborg himself wondered; and in his original record of this final scene he tells some things which are needful to understand it fully. He says:—

"Afterwards I asked Calvin how he could ascend into heaven with the idea of three Gods, and with the idea of the Lord that he is two. He replied that he was admitted into a certain lower society of heaven, and that there he abode among the last, who were not so fully explored; but that when he was explored, he went down, because he could not remain there, and that he betook himself to Luther in the world of spirits, and that he had now lived with him for some time, for the reason that Luther acknowledged the Human of the Lord to be Divine, and that he did not seem to be safe elsewhere. The priests said of Calvin that he was a well-behaved [probus] man, but simple, and that he wrote according to his simple thought, not considering whether it agreed or not with the Sacred Scriptures, nor with the Athanasian Creed."—S. D. Part vii., Sect. 5, p. 11.

It thus appears that the society in heaven to which he was admitted, was of the simple good, left in the lowest heaven when the evil were cast out in the Last Judgment, not yet thoroughly explored and instructed, and that Calvin remained there only by concealing his real thought, until such exploration and instruction were completed.

II. SEVEN WEEKS, AND THREESCORE AND TWO WEEKS.

An interesting point in regard to the interpretation of the Book of Daniel was lately brought to light in looking over a small manuscript of Swedenborg, published in 1845, by Dr. J. F. I. Tafel under the title of "Dicta Probantia" or "Proof-Texts." It consists of passages grouped under headings such as "Consummation," the "Holy Spirit," and others, and is really a converse of the small work entitled "Internal Sense of Prophets and Psalms," which takes up that portion of the Word in order, and indicates the true application of each passage, while the "Dicta Probantia"

begins with the titles and groups under them the texts. Here and there, however, the reader finds some words of explanation, especially as to the Book of Daniel, in regard to which Swedenborg makes the remark now to be considered. Speaking of the ninth chapter, which has been the field for so much disputation, he says: —

"By the desolation of Jerusalem, spoken of in verse 2, the devastation of the church in general is meant; and by verses 25, 26, and 27, the devastation of the Christian Church, as may clearly be seen from the Lord's words in MATT. xxiv. 15. The first state of the Christian Church, during which it was called the Apostolic Church, even to the Council of Nicæa, is treated of in verse 25, that it was in "troublous times" then on account of heresies. The second state of that church is treated of in verse 26; this was when the Papacy prevailed, in which all the Divine power of the Lord was transferred to the Pope, and the Word was almost buried, and with it all knowledge of the Lord and of truth: this is meant by "the Messiah or Christ being cut off." Verse 27 treats of the third state of that church, which is called that of the Reformation, in which the worship of the Lord ceased because they departed from him to three Gods from eternity, and hence fell into mere falsities, even to such a degree that not one spiritual truth remained, wherefore this is here called the "bird (or outspreading) of abomination, the desolation, destruction, and devastation," and by our Lord in MATT. xxiv. 15, the abomination of desolation foretold by Daniel, the prophet."—p. 12.

This statement that the period described in verse twenty-five referred to the era of the Church between the dates of the Lord's Coming and the Nicene Council was found to be one not made elsewhere by Swedenborg, though he frequently refers to the fact that in that first general council the adoption of a creed confessing three eternal persons in the Godhead was the doom of the early Christian Church. The idea immediately arose that if this period described as of "seven weeks and three score and two weeks," covered the whole time anterior to the Council, then the seven weeks might refer to the time of the Lord among men, and the

three score and two weeks to the apostolic period ending with the Council in A. D. 325.

It is certainly improper not to apply such figures closely when yet the spiritual meaning is recognized as the essential one. Whenever the literal fulfilment of a prophecy does not conflict with its spiritual and essential fulfilment, we find such completion of the prophecy recorded. Our Lord's riding into Jerusalem on an ass-colt is an instance of this sort, and some, led astray by such exceptional instances, insist upon a literal fulfilment as the true one, in regard to the world's destruction for example; but neither this extreme nor the opposite one which would exclude a literal fulfilment, in any case, is correct. Our Lord's whole example gives the right idea, namely: that prophecy pertains to spiritual things and is fulfilled spiritually, and naturally only when the natural fulfilment harmonizes with the spiritual.

Hence it seemed proper to calculate the ratio of seven and sixty-two, and compare the result with the ratio between the number of the years of our Lord's work on earth and the subsequent ante-Nicene period. The first ratio was found to be 113. In order to find the second, it was necessary to take into consideration the well-known fact that the birth at Bethlehem occurred four years earlier than the date assigned by Dionysius, the Roman abbot, who first introduced the method of dating from the birth of the Saviour. This would give the whole period as one of three hundred and twenty-nine years. The years of our Lord's life on earth are generally held to be about thirty-three and a third. At the beginning of His ministry, He was "about thirty," and He was crucified on the fourth Passover following; which would allow for His work three whole years and a part of a fourth. Taking this period to be that of a generation, we have two hundred and ninety-five and two-thirds years as the period represented by the three score and two weeks. The ratio between thirty-three and one-third and two hundred and ninety-five and two-thirds is 113, the

very same! The ratio between seven and sixty-two might be carried out to several decimal places, and then that part of three hundred and twenty-nine bearing precisely the same relation to the other part of three hundred and twenty-nine might be easily ascertained. This process would give for the years represented by seven weeks thirty-three and a little more than a third, or 33.3768. Thus we find a perfect equation, namely, 7 :62 = period of Incarnation : period of Apostolic Church, which is certainly a remarkable confirmation of the interpretation and a fact worth bringing out.

It may be added that on the same page of the "Dicta Probantia," Swedenborg cites the "Apocalypse Revealed," showing that the date at which he was writing was subsequent to the publication of most of his works.

III. AS TO THE FIRST USE OF BAPTISM.

In n. 680 of the "True Christian Religion," Swedenborg speaks of the first use of baptism as being a "sign in the spiritual world that one is of Christians where every one is inserted among societies and congregations according to the quality of the Christianity in him or out of him (in illo aut extra illum)."

This has been understood in two ways. It has been taken to mean that "societies" refer to heaven, and "congregations" to hell; thus, that if the Christianity be "in him," he is inserted into a heavenly society; if "out of him," or not in him, into a congregation of evil spirits. The other way is to understand that by societies and congregations are meant, respectively, angelic societies, and those less fully organized and temporary communities which consist of persons lately deceased, and thus in the world of spirits. In this view the meaning of "in him or out of him," is, "in him" if he be an adult, and "out of him," that is, round about him, if he be an infant or an uninstructed gentile.

The latter seems to be the true meaning. Swedenborg uses the word congregations of infernal societies, it is true, as in n. 678, but he also uses it of collections of persons in

the world of spirits. A good instance of this may be seen in the "Continuation concerning the Last Judgment," (n. 9,) where he speaks of the "congregations of spirits, who had made for themselves, as it were, heavens between heaven and hell," and who were the subjects of the judgment. (See also n. 11). But in n. 21, he speaks of societies both in heaven and in hell. It should also be noticed that he does not say "societies OR congregations," in the passage under consideration as if there were an antithesis.

Now, in n. 677, he says: —

"Therefore, as soon as infants are baptized, angels are appointed over them, by whom they are kept in a state of receiving faith in the Lord; and as they grow up, and come to the exercise of their own right and their own reason, the guardian angels leave them, and they associate to themselves such spirits as make one with their life and faith."

This seems to explain how we have to do through baptism both with angelic societies and with congregations of the world of spirits.

That Swedenborg means by "out of him" (extra illum), the quality of Christianity surrounding one, appears from his use of the Word in n. 875 of the "Apocalypse Revealed," where, at the end, he speaks of the surroundings of those in the other world, saying: —

"This is effected by the heat and light proceeding from the Lord as a sun, in the angels and spirits and thence outside of them (in angelis et spiritibus et inde extra illos)."

When one is baptized, he is introduced into certain spiritual companionship; and, as when he leaves this world, he will be instructed by those who have been of the same sort of religion with himself, and will lay aside his falsities or make farther progress in the truth under their guidance (see "Heaven and Hell," n. 515), so now his companionship is of that sort to which he has been introduced by baptism, — which sort was his own if he had advanced into years of

reason, — or was that of those whose ranks he then joined if baptized as an infant.

The idea that baptism may associate any one with hell is a monstrous one. An infant has as yet no Christianity in him, and thus would be introduced to infernal companionship! But that view is not only abhorrent to reason, it is not in accordance with what seems to be the proper interpretation of "congregationes" and "extra."

IV. THE KORAN.

"It was said to me that among the Mohammedans there is a book which is well known and is common there, in which some pages were written by means of correspondences, from which pages there is some light thence in the heavens." — Spiritual Diary, n. 5809.

With much that refers to merely civil and moral affairs, the Koran contains somewhat varied accounts of the Garden of Eden, chapter xx.; the life of Joseph, xii.; Moses' acts before Pharoah, vii.; adventures in the journey of the Israelites, xx.; Zecharias, iii.; Mary, xix.; and other portions which have in our Bible a spiritual meaning. There is also chapter lxxxi., beginning, "When the sun shall be folded up, and when the stars shall fall."

A CORRECT TRANSLATION.

"Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" — Luke xxiv. 18.

I find a question in my pocket-book, asked me by someone, respecting the sense of this verse. Comparing the Greek of this verse with the Greek of other verses, a meaning is made out which is entirely new to me.

"He was there alone." — Matt. xiv. 23.
"And He alone on the land." — Mk. vi. 47.

"Dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?"—LUKE, x. 40.

"And Jesus was left alone."—JOHN, viii. 9.

Hence read:—"Art thou dwelling alone in Jerusalem, and *so* did not know the things that came to pass in it in these days?" Those who understand Greek will see how very exact this translation is. The verb "art dwelling" is in the present tense. "Did know" and "came to pass" are in the Aorist—not perfect "hast known," etc.

He is asked whether or not He has been living in some room all by Himself, and so has not mingled with people in the city to hear what has been doing of late. His living utterly alone is the only explanation of the ignorance thought of by the questioner, so mighty in deed and word BEFORE GOD AND ALL THE PEOPLE hath Jesus of Nazareth been in these days. "*Before all the people*"—so He must have been up in some little room, alone!

[NOTE.—Mr. Paine's view of this passage is confirmed, it may be well to add, by such high authorities as Dean Alford and the "Speakers' Commentary," except that they make the verb to mean "sojourn" rather than "dwell," citing HEB. xi. 9, "he sojourned in the land of promise." The version of Schmidius, which has especial merit in its accuracy, has "*solus peregrinatis*," meaning "dost thou sojourn alone?"—ED.]

BOOK NOTICES.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF NICE; A WORLD'S CHRISTIAN CONVENTION, A. D. 325, WITH A LIFE OF CONSTANTINE. By DEAN DUDLEY. Boston: C. W. Calkins & Co. 1880. pp. 120.

THE Council of Nice is an interesting, yet melancholy subject to a New-Churchman; for he finds in its decrees, and in the tone of its proceedings, a complete departure from true faith and charity. The epoch of the Apostolic Church then ceased, and that of rapidly developed heresies, of schisms and of councils called to coerce heretics, began. Thus, says Swedenborg:—

"Darkness arose over the whole Christian world; first by the heretical

opinions of many spread about, and soon afterwards by the deliberations and decrees of the Nicene Council concerning three divine persons from eternity."—T. C. R. n. 206.

He also says:—

"In the Apostolic Church, all in the Christian world acknowledged that the Lord Jesus Christ was God, to whom is given all power in heaven and on earth; but the convocation of bishops, wishing to avoid Charybdis fell upon Scylla, by inventing a Son from eternity who descended and assumed the human; not knowing that God himself, the Creator of the universe, descended, that he might become the Redeemer."—T. C. R. n. 637.

"In the primitive church, after the Lord's advent, all the members of the church lived as brethren among one another. But afterwards charity diminished. As charity vanished, evils succeeded; and with evils, falsities insinuated themselves. Hence arose schisms and heresies; which would never have been if charity had lived and ruled. Then a schism would not even have been called a schism, nor a heresy, heresy, but a doctrinal belief according to the opinion of him who held it; which they would have left to the conscience of every one."—A. C. n. 1834.

The writer of the book before us has done little more than cite from contemporary historians some account of the events and parties of the Council. Wherever his own spirit appears, it seems to be hostile to Christianity; but his pages are nearly filled with quotations, and this fact renders the book a valuable one. We know of none better except Stanley's "Eastern Church," which is a large and expensive volume. We propose to quote a few passages indicating the spirit of the Council as being thoroughly unchristian in its tone toward differences of opinion, and toward Arius in particular:—

"Impelled by avarice and ambition, . . they trample upon the religion of the church; . . instigated by Satanic agency."—*Alexander, bishop of Alexandria.* p. 37. "Pestilential error."—*Letter of the Council.* p. 73. "These Atheists."—*Eustathius, bishop of Antioch.* p. 85.

"Arius vomits forth the poison of impiety. He conceals the venom of heresy by usurping the naked words of the Scripture."—*Athanasius.* p. 86.

"They drew words from the dunghill, and published them upon earth." *Ibid.* p. 89.

"The impious perverseness of Arius. His blasphemous sentiments."—*The Synodical Epistle.* p. 109.

These epithets were applied to one who seems to have been of good outward life, and whose opinions prevailed largely after his condemnation in the Council. They are, as is well known, the

views of the more moderate Unitarians. But Athanasius, whose creed was afterward generally adopted, having been commanded by the Emperor Constantine to receive Arius, who had been relieved from his excommunication, refused to admit him to communion. p. 71.

The condition of things outside the Council may appear from such statements as these: —

"The common people took part. Those who had been most friendly hitherto now fought against each other with their tongues instead of spears."— *Theodoret.* p. 51.

"One of the laity, who had stood the test of persecution, reproved these reasoners, telling them that Christ and his apostles did not teach us the dialectic art, but simple mindedness which is preserved by faith and good works."— *Socrates.* p. 60.

"The Arian contests, as was to be expected, produced several new sects." p. 117.

Among these new opinions that which was afterward made the corner stone of the Reformation was found. One taught "that faith alone, without works, was sufficient for the salvation of man" (p. 119); while it is interesting to notice that Plotinus of Sirmium held "that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are only one person." p. 118.

We commend this book as a very convenient one for those who desire sometimes to refer to the Nicene Council for the purpose of showing its true effect upon Christianity. Certainly it is not wonderful that out of this controversy only error and schism arose. T. F. W.

Poems. By Edwin Arnold. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1880. pp. 246.

Within a few months Edwin Arnold's name has become a familiar one with the readers of this country. "The Light of Asia," or "The Great Renunciation," is the volume which has introduced Mr. Arnold here, and the poem is of deep interest and great beauty, while the hand that wielded the pen is a master-hand. The volume of "Poems" is broader in scope than "The Light of Asia," and introduces to many and varied moods of the poet's mind. Two-fifths of the book are a translation or paraphrase from a Sanscrit idyl, the "Gita Govinda, or Song of Govind," in which — "under the form of Krishna, an incarnation of the god Vishnu — the hu-

man soul is displayed in its relations alternately with earthly and celestial beauty." Krishna is at first led by the natural or lower plane of his being to follow the lead of the senses (personified by the shepherdesses in the wood), and wastes his affections upon them. Then Radha, the spirit of intellectual and moral beauty, comes, and the poem depicts "the gradual emancipation of Krishna from sensuous distractions, and his union with Radha in a high and spiritualized happiness."

In the poem entitled, "After Death in Arabia," beginning with the lines

> He who died at Azan sends
> This to comfort all his friends:

occurs the following, a beautiful truth in a worthy setting: —

> Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell;
> Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
> I am gone before your face,
> A moment's time, a little space.
> When ye come where I have steppe
> Ye will wonder why ye wept;
> Ye will know by wise love taught,
> That here is all, and there is naught.
> Weep awhile, if ye are fain, —
> Sunshine still must follow rain;
> Only not at death, — for death,
> Now I learn, is that first breath
> Which our souls draw when we enter
> Life, which is of all life centre.

In conclusion, we can only refer to a poem that has appeared in the daily press in this country anonymously, and in this volume is first publicly given as from Mr. Arnold's pen. It has been entitled "He and She," "The Contrast," but here is entitled "She and He." If poetry is especially the language of the devout, then is this a poem indeed. This volume adds to the already high reputation of its author. H. P. C.

The Dawn of History: an Introduction to Pre-historic Study. Edited by C. F. Keary, M. A., of the British Museum. London: Mozley & Smith. 1878. pp. 231.

We have only lately read this little book, and are desirous of praising it, although not finding in it that view of the early stages of human history which we are prepared fully to accept. We have

here fourteen very modestly written treatises, by several persons of the name of Keary, upon such subjects as "the earliest traces of man," "the growth of language," "early social life," "religion," "mythologies and folk lore," etc. The reader is supposed to be a person who has made no study of pre-historic man, and the effort is made to tell him in simple terms just what is known. Such a degree of candor must necessarily exhibit the incomplete condition of knowledge on this subject, but from this the writers do not shrink.

On the great question, for instance, as to the district in which man was first found, it says: —

"It is in Europe that most of these earliest traces of our race have as yet been found, though all tradition and likelihood point out man's first home to have been in Central Asia." — p. 6.

And again: —

"We cannot tell whether the picture which we are able to form of man of the earliest time, — of the first stone age, — is a general or a partial picture; whether it represents the majority of his fellow-creatures, or only a particular race strayed from the first home of man." — p. 69.

Every one must commend the very pleasant spirit of these admissions, so far removed from that dogmatism which has insisted that what is known of man in Europe in early times covers the whole possible ground of inquiry, and settles the question forever, leaving the opposite deductions from the study of Asiatic remains entirely out of view.

We also read, of the fruits of pre-historic studies, that —

"The long silent time which intervenes between the creation of our first parents and those biblical events whereof the narration is, to a certain extent, continuous and consecutive, till the dawn of history in the Bible narrative, in fact, is to some extent filled in." — p. 17.

On this point of the Bible story, the remark is made that —

"In the Bible narrative continuous history begins, at the earliest, not before the time of Abraham." — p. 68.

Of the migrations which brought the Asiatic peoples into Europe, a clear account is given. Of ancient religions, the book treats with the same care. Speaking of that of Egypt, and of the origin of the worship of animals, it says: —

"This is one of the problems which must be left to be determined by

further researches into unwritten history, or perhaps by a fuller understanding of Egyptian symbols." — p. 124.

Would that all study into antiquity were conducted with the same respect for sacred things, the same delay in drawing conclusions, and the same kind care in giving information. T. F. W.

New Bed-time Stories, with Illustrations. By Louise Chandler Moulton. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1880. pp. 230.

Jack and Jill: a Nursery Story, with Illustrations. By Louisa M. Alcott. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1880. pp. 325.

To write a story good for children it must be interesting to men and women who love children, as well as to the little ones. This may seem an easy task to some, nay, does so seem, if we are to judge by the multitude of children's books published yearly; but it is not easy to write a good juvenile book. The number of editions that a child's book sells is not a criterion of its intrinsic worth. It may be of a style that is popular and in demand, but the question then is, is the demand elevated and pure? The written word often sows a seed deeper than the spoken word ever may, and it is with books somewhat as it is with men and women — *good* company is to be sought after.

These thoughts are suggested by a perusal of the books above named. In the first a quiet, soothing spirit prevails quite appropriate to the bed-time, and sweet should be the sleep and pleasant the dreams of the little ones who may lose themselves in such company. There is a charm that lulls to sleep in the sound of some loved voice (oh, how lovingly remembered in after years!) reading aloud when the curtain is down, and weariness invites to rest.

At the close of "My Vagrant," one of the Bed-time Stories, occur these beautiful lines: —

"He was as resolute to ally himself, for that girl's sake, with poverty, and, if need were, shame, as ever was a hero to live or die for the land of his birth; and out in the rain, down in the desolate street, I watched my vagrant go away from me forever. But I did not pity him. No soul is to be pitied which has reached life's crowning good, — the power to love another better than itself."

Again, in the "Surgeon of the Dolls' Hospital," this: —

"And after all, ma'am," she added cheerfully, "there's nothing happier in all the world than to give all the pleasure you can to somebody."

These stories tend rather to touch on the minor chords of life, which will do no harm if not overdone. There may be rich harmony in the minor chords, and thoughtfulness is by no means too common now-a-days.

Who has not read of Jack and Jill (it used to be spelled Gill), and the catastrophe that overtook them? This is in Miss Alcott's own quiet vein; and out of the old nursery legend she has woven a bright, helpful story for children. Perhaps no greater contrast in children's books could be found than in the two above, but both have some admirable recommendations to the juvenile library.

H. P. C.

Indirect Testimony of History to the Genuineness of the Gospels. By Frederic Huidekoper. New York: James Miller. 1880. pp. 218.

Prof. Huidekoper, of the Meadville Theological School, has collected into the volume before us a great amount of indirect evidence of the genuineness of the Gospels for the purpose of disproving the allegation of the School of Strauss and Renan that the Gospels originated in the second century, being compiled from myths and traditions as to our Lord. Of this Prof. H. remarks: —

"Such views, modified to suit the various fancies of their advocates, have found a credence explicable only by the general lack of acquaintance with early Christian history." — p. 14.

He then proceeds to cite the controversies, opinions, and customs which were the chief objects of Christian thought in the second century, and to show that no reference to them is made in the Gospels, which could not therefore have been compiled at that time. This point is elaborated with great detail, and no shadow of doubt would rest in a reasonable mind after reading this volume.

Incidentally, the book is full of interesting accounts of early Christianity, of the opinions as to the overthrow of demons by the Lord, His Mission to the Underworld, etc. The appendix includes in full several of the most important apocryphal accounts of the Lord.

In a note at the end we have a little treatise on the Christian ministry, its present defects and the remedy, and Prof. H. makes the novel suggestion, that a library of good books, treating questions of importance, should be provided so that after devotional

exercises on Sunday the congregation might turn to the books, each one attending to his own wants. This is suggested on the ground that ministers cannot supply the wants of all their people. We think they can if they try, if the principal end in view all through the week is to minister to the needs of the people. The books would, of course, be better than much of modern preaching, because the preaching is not done in careful attention to the people's questions, but roams over all literature feebly instead of treating upon the Book of Books alone. We hope to see the time when the sensational preaching which takes up every topic, whether in science, art, or literature, will be a thing of the past, and when the preacher's work will be to draw from the Word the truth that is in it. T. F. W.

XXXVI. Lyrics and XII. Sonnets selected from the Cloth of Gold and Flower and Thorn. By T. B. Aldrich. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1881. pp. 93.

In workmanship, this is one of the daintiest volumes ever issued in America. The pure white parchment cover, with the title printed in red, is a fitting garment for the graceful forms of thought which it covers. To turn the pages is like walking in a flower garden on a summer day, when the air is full of delicious perfumes, and the eye is dazzled with the delicate tints of rich color. We have space but to pluck

THE ONE WHITE ROSE.

A sorrowful woman said to me,
"Come in and look on our child."
I saw an Angel at shut of day,
And it never spoke — but smiled.

I think of it in the city's streets,
I dream of it when I rest, —
The violet eyes, the waxen hands,
And the one white rose on the breast! H. P. C.

Stories and Romances. By Horace E. Scudder. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1880. pp. 298.

Whoever has read "Dream Children," or "Stories from my Attic," by this author, will want to read this volume of eight stories. Whoever has not read the two named above, had best do so without delay, for they are charming books. Mr. Scudder is a

good story teller. This art is quite common in England, but not so here, as yet. "Stories and Romances" have a moral, and are written with a purpose beyond that of mere amusement. More than one character seen in everyday life is clearly depicted in these pages. Mr. Scudder is original and therefore interesting.

H. P. C.

Our Little Ones. Vol. I. No. 1. Boston: Russell Publishing Company. $1.50 per annum.

A new Magazine for children must be, indeed, fine to compete with those already in existence. The special feature of this one, it is declared, will be illustrations of artistic excellence. We judge by the fact that "Oliver Optic" is announced as Editor, that the leading idea will be to make fun for the little ones. It would, of course, be unjust to judge the whole from the first number, but the author's name is so closely connected with a mischievous sort of youthful literature, that we venture to criticise a picture which appears here representing a cat chased by a dog which has been set upon her by boys who had tied a tin can to her tail. It may be funny, but we do not like to have what is fiendish made to seem funny.

T. F. W.

The New Englander. — The number of this *Magazine* for September is so interesting that we would refer to its contents in some detail. Hopeful as the New-Churchman must be for the removal of error from the minds of men, and conscious as he must be that the progress of any branch of the church universal is closely connected with that of the whole, even as the health of a part with the health of the whole body, he looks with interest upon every encouraging sign among co-workers.

The first article, on "the Historical Position of Modern Missions," is an attempt to compare the period of the first propagation of Christianity with the present time. It cites the fact that in the first period, the Roman Empire held sway over a great portion of the then known world, and thus afforded a means of transmitting the Gospel, and dwells upon the wonderful degree of unity in human affairs to-day. In religious condition, too, there is a likeness; the indifference of the Romans to their gods is compared with the attitude of heathen nations toward their religions. "Heathenism is everywhere disintegrating." The dispersion of the Jews at the time of the Christian Era is referred to in connec-

tion with the present wide distribution of English-speaking people. There is also said to be a wide-spread expectation of great change. "With some, it is restlessness and dissatisfaction with doctrinal forms and beliefs that unite more or less of human philosophy and speculation with interpretations of the Word of God." With others it takes other forms: —

"The new interest in the study of the Scriptures which the Revision of the English version now in progress is to aid and intensify, the discussions which as never before centre about the person and work of Christ, and the wide-spread interest in missionary enterprises of every name, are the beginning of a great reaction, and . . . the promise of a new era."

The writer then sums up as favorable signs of the present time the great historic changes of the last twenty-five years, the missionary movement now embracing five thousand workers, the "developing" power of Christianity manifested in the progress of certain converts from heathendom, the already almost universal diffusion of some knowledge of Christianity, and the appreciation of what is good in gentile religious systems; and concludes by saying: —

"Great events thicken. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, come.'"

An article on "Evolution and Christianity" is strong and conclusive. The writer describes the two theories of creation now in vogue. That one which recognizes the order of creation by various stages of which each forms the basis for the next, which, however, proceeds from a new creative act, is pleasantly spoken of, but not enlarged upon. "It has not been definitely formulated," says the writer, and this we hope to see attempted before long, and believe it might be well done by some New-Churchman. The second view of evolution excluding all creative acts with all supernatural agency, is carefully considered. The various stages of the process, as believed in by Mr. Spencer, are treated from the beginning in an uncaused spiral motion of molecules to the "evolution in the far-off future of man in such perfect harmony with environing nature as to be without memory, feeling, reason, or will," and makes three objections to the whole hypothesis as to its first principles, its facts, and its methods. These objections are strongly and successfully urged, and the writer then says: —

"Either the different stages of the world's progress have been initiated by the putting forth of new divine energies, or all the potencies revealed in

those stages must have been attributes of the original atoms. The latter is the evolutionary method; the former combines creative interposition with evolution on the different planes. The best type and true idea of evolution is in growth. It is a continuous process by the same forces on the same plane. We might call the gradual consolidation of nebulous matter round its centres, evolution. But as we pass up from the realm of gravity to that of chemistry, and from that of chemistry to those of life and reason, there is no continuous process."

A writer speaks wisely of the unfortunate prevalence of hostility among men having the same general aim, and says: —

"Christianity is not faith without any regard to works, nor is it conduct without any regard to what one believes: it is both. It is not orthodox opinion to the displacement of charity, nor is it a life full of almsdeeds and sweet helpfulness as though the maintaining of the form of sound words were of no consequence: it is both."

Finally, an article entitled, "Do We Need an Ethical Revival?" is best of all. The writer admits that "the religion of our time is wanting in reality and depth and practical power over the life and character," that instances of unfaithfulness in church-members are "signal examples of the demoralization of conscience going on beneath," and that the "greatest obstacle to the triumph of Christianity arises from the inconsistency of its professed friends;" and thinks one cause of this condition is to be found in the "preaching of the day": —

"We think we shall not speak amiss if we characterize it to a large extent as shallow and superficial, producing only transient and superficial results. It is not so much preaching of the Word or truth of God, as it is of human thought and human fancies. . . Much of the preaching of the present day is secular."

Another cause of the difficulty is the error as to faith, — "which, being regarded as an act, rather than a principle, is supposed to carry salvation with it and make it secure irrespective of character." Is not this the effect of much of our revival preaching, and many of our popular revival hymns, such as "Jesus paid it all — all the debt I owe, and nothing either great or small remains for me to do?" Do we not place an undue estimate on a mere technical experience called conversion? . . . But the faith which justifies is not a dead faith divorced from works, — not *imputed* merely, but *imparted* as a living power. This doctrine of Paul and Luther needs to be guarded from abuse in our day, by the comple-

mentary doctrine of James." The writer believes that the remedy is not to be found in revivals of religion; preaching must be more ethical; sin needs to be presented not as a misfortune, but as guilt; and the "vital unity" between faith and works must be restored. Such articles from conspicuous evangelical clergymen, are as creditable to them as interesting to us, and to all who seek the revivification and resurrection of truly Christian faith and life.

The *Princeton Review* for September is largely metaphysical, but has an excellent article on "Herbert Spencer's Theory of Sociology," by Dr. Noah Porter. If any one desires to see this theory handled without gloves, let him read this criticism. The doctor thinks that the harm of this theory and others like it comes to those who "have yielded their intellects to false methods of inquiry, and sold themselves to sophistical ways of judgment and shallow and unworthy reasons for belief," and adds: —

"We wonder that the thought has never occurred to Mr. Spencer that possibly those relations in the universe which are supreme and controlling, are those which in common speech men call personal and moral; that a self-existent person and created persons are not inconceivable or self-contradictory conceptions; that a universe controlled by such relations is as dignified and philosophical a universe as one that depends on moving star-dust for its beginning and explanation, and which ends in a brilliant explosion as its finale. We might even venture to suggest that in a book which cannot have been entirely overlooked in Mr. Spencer's manifold reading, the doctrine of Evolution with such elements and such agencies is clearly taught, and analogies from physiological processes are as freely applied to illustrate the progress of the kingdom of Heaven and of God as they are by Mr. Spencer himself. . . . In the kingdom of God, which God is even now developing on the earth by natural forces under supernatural guidance, the perfect society will be at last real on the earth, and the science of Sociology will be illustrated in a living example when the 'Tabernacle of God shall be with men.'" T. F. W.

MONTHLY NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Places for New-Church Ministers.

We were once asked by one who had no acquaintance with the doctrines of the New Church, the question, "How many societies have you in Massachusetts?" "Twenty," we answered. "Then you have places for but twenty ministers."

But it would be well to notice that a society and a place for a minister are not one and the same thing. Suppose we count how many places there are in Massachusetts needing our ministers. We might commence with circles where twelve or twenty meet for service on Sunday under lay leadership, and go on down to individuals, and where should we leave off? Only at the State line. Where is there a community, with the exception of the few already furnished with societies, that does not need New-Church help? We do not mean to imply that they do not have much help from the churches already there, but, without disparaging these, we do not hesitate to say that more is wanted. Every one who is growing at all needs new truth. And if there be new truth anywhere and any who teach it, these are needed everywhere, especially in those places where prejudice against new truth, because it is new, has least sway.

Of those in the churches who have any difficulty with Calvinism or deism, of those who are not content with the doctrine of the resurrection of the material body, of those who wish to know the depths of truth in the Word, and to love it in reason rather than to accept it on authority, we speak when we say that there is room for New-Church teaching. And of those not in the churches, who are sincere in their renunciation of false doctrines, the same remark may be made.

When our Lord sent forth His disciples, no one had invited them to come. Their Master was about to be crucified as an impostor, yet He sent them into all the world, because all the world needed help. And they and their successors went forth in the spirit of their commission. When Paul and Timothy came to Macedonia it was without other bidding than a vision of the night; and they went forth fearlessly, and came to Phillipi unknown. But, finding no reception, they did not go back, saying, "No one needs us;" they went down by the river on the Sabbath day, and as we read, "a certain woman named Lydia heard us." (Acts xvi. 14). This was all after "certain days," and they baptized her and her household, and were grateful in their hearts for the privilege, though all the time likely to be cast into prison. And when they had been imprisoned and released, on they went, preaching the good tidings of great joy.

Again a new era has begun. New light has fallen upon men. There is a new message to bring, and a new life to live for others' sakes. The Lord has opened His Word, has manifested Himself

as the God of heaven and earth, and has taught the world, by means of a truthful, good man, the wonders of the other world. Men may draw very near to the Lord now, and be very secure from all doubt and harm. They all need this, whether willing to receive it or not. But some are willing to receive. We heard one lately give account of visiting over one hundred places in Massachusetts, and of finding in a rapid trip more than two hundred New-Church people. They bought over three hundred books and pamphlets. Here are places for ministers. Here is a society of two hundred, which can be visited four times a year, which needs hundreds of books, and scarcely hears New-Church preaching. Or, let a section be taken — say what one could cover in a month. Such people do not want mere enthusiasm in their minister, they do not want him to argue with them or with those who differ from them; they want the ministry of the Lord Jesus, they want Him brought near to them in their trials, they want the Bible made plain and lovely, they want some one to come to sick beds and graves, and tell plainly of the hereafter.

We know a little town of not two thousand people, in the State of Maine, where a man who had found the light did not go away, seeking an already established society, but began to be a minister of the New Church among any of his neighbors who cared for it. A great interest soon quickened the religious life of that community; some in the churches, some without, were kindled; there is a society there now and a tasteful, commodious church building. So Thomas Worcester, in Boston, in the difficult days of sixty years ago, accepted the invitation of a society of twelve.

It is the common experience of our little Theological School, that the students are invited to preach too soon for their own good. What wonder, seeing what it is they have to preach? And Massachusetts, of which we have spoken, is only an instance of the religious needs of people throughout the country.

Of course, worldly remuneration will not be great, but there will be a place to lay one's head, there will be welcome from somebody everywhere, and there will be the sweet consciousness of serving the Lord and the neighbor in a very high degree. Let us not hear it said, therefore, "no man hath hired us," for the answer has been already spoken, "Go ye also unto the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive."

Unitarianism.

The National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian churches, held at Saratoga, was a notable gathering on account of the public standing of many engaged in it, and of the utterances of its speakers on subjects of supreme importance. We have been struck with two points brought out, and will call attention to them in the effort to use that kindness and candor which we would like to have used in return.

On the evening before the Conference opened, a sermon was delivered by an English minister, who came over as the representative of the British Unitarians. His text was: "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil;" and in the course of his able treatment of the subject, he said: —

"It is surely a melancholy perversion of all the objects of a church, when a congregation which assembles to refresh its faith in the invisible powers is sent home more forlorn and weary than it came. The saddest aspect of English religion in the present day is the readiness with which some liberal preachers take up new theories and preach them as ascertained truths. A young man who has had no religious experience, who never saw the deep waters closing over his head, who never once had a chance of putting a deep religious trust to its last and utmost test, thinks it his duty to tell his congregation all the latest doubts. He speculates, perhaps, on the philosophy of prayer, or talks about anthropomorphic conceptions of God, till his hearers wonder why he prays at all, or what it really is he worships. He cannot understand the deep religious meaning which underlies even the intellectual mistakes of prophets and apostles, and he finds it easy to convict Moses of narrowness, and the prophets of bigotry, and David and Solomon of conduct unworthy their repute. Even Paul may be shown to have been a bad reasoner, and Peter to be fanatical, and even Jesus to have been wrong; and he delights in the task. The impression he leaves upon his hearers is that all the faith and hope of all the ages has been wrong, though he winds up by words of trust, in which they are exhorted to put their faith in God, though he cannot hear them ask for daily bread; and to live for an immortal life, though there is no evidence that such a life exists beyond the gap and dark of death. In such preaching as this, the conclusion is contrary to the premises, the moral is not that which the story really bears. A merely negative argument can never come out in a positive result. You will not feed the conscience by filling the intellect with uncertainty. You will never stimulate heroic motives by casting doubt on all that heroes have believed. You will not build up the fabric of the living church by perpetually demonstrating that the saints and martyrs who laid its first foundations put them on the sand."

Such noble words were worthy to be brought over the water, and we fear there was great need of their utterance, for on the

very next day, just after the address of the President, an essay was read defining the Unitarian attitude and purpose, and containing these words taken from the report of the Conference made for the *Christian Register*: —

"It is quite time that we declare very plainly our belief in the humanity of Jesus Christ. We have denied that he is God; but we have not, as a denomination, planted ourselves firmly upon the only alternative, that he was a man. Herein is a great cause of our weakness. We have been as open as our opponents to the charge of mystery and unreasonableness in religion; and, by raising the founder of Christianity into an incarnation of the Deity, we have lost the fellowship of that vast body throughout the world, who long for the elder faith of pure and undefiled monotheism. The apostles, being Jews, had no thought of Jesus as other than a human being."

The full purport of these words seems to be, that the Unitarian body is to take a position purely Jewish so far as regards its view of the Lord. He was simply man, not Divinely so, the Man of men, the Christ of God, but a rabbi merely, a man among men. This view makes Him to have been deceitful or mistaken when He said, "Before Abraham was, I am," when He wept over Jerusalem saying, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not," when He said, "I and the Father are one." It takes away the Lord from men and, in respect to religion, remands them to the previous era; nay, it gives them Judaism deprived of its very soul — the hope of the Messiah. We know that this is done for the sake of monotheism, and in the belief that faith in the Incarnation is faith in a tri-personal God. If we represented Arianism, we should feel compelled to yield the point; but it is because we represent monotheism that is not Judaism, the one God not unrevealed but manifest, the doctrine of genuine Christianity, that we grieve to see this illustration of the very error so fully depicted in our first extract, this wandering away into darkness which comprehendeth not the Light that shineth, the Light of the world.

It is not for us to predict the outcome of such a position. The apostles, contrary to this statement, *did* believe, with Thomas, that the Saviour was their Lord, and with this message they went out. How can a body successfully go out into the great field of the world without the message of glad tidings, and how can it avoid begetting, by this depreciation of the declarations of the Gospels, that irreverence for everything holy of which we find

evidence in a remark made by one of the leading ministers in his official report?

"There is little inspiration possible now-a-days without some money basis. Experience proves that even the Holy Ghost is somewhat dependent upon a financial environment."

The Unitarians are noted for their noble charitable work. But would not the spirits of the gifted men and women who engage in it be hallowed and strengthened by accepting that discipleship which is the service of Him who gave us, by His Word and work, the commandment without which Judaism had still reigned — the law of the Golden Rule,— and who, the only Emanuel, has taught us the fulness of the Divine love?

Ministers and Sunday Schools.

We lately accepted an invitation to be present at a Sunday School Conference held by people of another Christian body, and were particularly struck with the earnestness displayed by all who took part. Much was said about the fact that the lack of religious training at home was such as to throw almost all the care of the children's spiritual interests upon their Sunday School teachers. This was deplored, but regarded as a fact which must be taken into consideration most seriously; and we saw much emotion expressed, especially by the older men, in view of their great responsibility.

We were surprised to find that few ministers seemed to be present, and that the care of the Sunday Schools seemed to be in the hands of superintendents who spoke as if the schools were in their keeping as much as the other interests of the societies were in the hands of the ministers. While we were thinking of this, a minister rose and gave indirect testimony to his utter neglect of his school by describing a "concert" in his own vestry at which he was present as a spectator, and was much surprised and pleased to find the scholars so proficient.

Then came an address by a minister, but we were astonished to hear him say that he had never attended a Sunday School Conference before. His address was on the importance of a "true and straight aim" in the work of teaching, but was not of a nature calculated to give aid to already earnest teachers.

Is it not right that the minister should be in the Sunday School, and be as responsible for its good conduct as for that of any other

religious meeting? Is there any part of the work of the society which is more important? Is the care of the poor, or of the sick, of more importance than that of the children on whose proper religious training the future life of the society depends? It is not probable that any one has more books which throw light upon the lessons and is better able than the minister to hold the teachers' meeting. It is to be hoped that no one takes more interest in saving souls.

It is undoubtedly true that the minister cannot do all. It is often true that his physical ability finds its limit in the conduct of a single public service on the Sabbath. But we can see no reason why he cannot lead the teachers in that work which is peculiarly his profession. In the school itself, also, we think that he may find an important place in conducting a normal class designed to prepare teachers. He would thus become well acquainted with those to be called to the work, would be able to select with judgment, and to assist wisely afterward. And he would be contributing his fair share of work in the way which would bring his ability to bear with most advantage to the whole school.

Sunday Schools are of the New Age, and are an important agency in its development. The truths of the New Age make our duty to children very plain, and give a great deal of light as to the proper way of training them. First in this work, evidently, should be the people of the New Church which has this light; and most helpful of all in the application of the truth which bears upon this subject should be those who are set apart to teach the truth of the New Age, and so to lead to the good of its life.

Questionable Liberality.

"I come as a laborer in the interests of all denominations. I certainly desire the prosperity of all; believing that each church is doing better for those who are attached to it than any other church can do, no matter how much more truth it may teach."

The writer of these words, which we take from a circular soliciting funds for the support of a missionary work to be performed by him, — one of our ministers, — must excuse us if we express disapprobation of the position he has taken. The fallacy of the idea expressed in the extract is clear when we seek an answer to the question, what does our friend propose to do? The denominations are doing well; no one having more truth can do better for them; why, then, does a missionary go among them? But to

press this question would doubtless be unjust. It is not the intention to say that the denominations are in possession of the full truth, but that their ministers can better convey truth to them than those who use different and unfamiliar terms, and who may not so well understand the peculiar attitudes of the members of the various sects.

But there is one thing which is always to be kept in mind, namely: the impossibility of joining truth with falsity. "The faith of the New Church cannot by any means be together with the faith of the former church," says Swedenborg ("Brief Exposition," n. 102), and then explains that a belief in the tri-personal existence of God cannot be held at the same time with a belief in God as one person, for the attempt to do so would distract and injure the mind. So with other points of faith. The error must give place to the truth. It was so in Swedenborg's own experience as the first member of the New Church, and the instrument under Providence of its initiament on earth in fulfilment of prophesy. Therefore, New-Churchmen have seen it to be a part of their duty to publish and circulate books, and to contribute the means of supporting missionary work. Its missionaries going forth with a full confession of their office and purpose, are invited to preach and lecture here and there, and they comply, with the double purpose of building up societies of the New Church which may be in their turn centres of influence, and of providing ministers and members of the various bodies, who may not be ready to take the full step of forming a new connection, with such new truth as they may be willing to receive. The gradual absorption of such truth in the world is evident, and the usefulness of the various Christian bodies has been of late years greatly increased on account of laying aside by little and little the faith of the Dark Ages, and replacing it with that which is much better.

And cannot ministers, like our friend, do more good by openly acknowledging their belief that false principles are still largely held and preached after the old manner, that such ideas are not in accordance with the Word of the Lord, and would be profitably exchanged for those of the New Age? We regret, then, to have our friend's liberal policy carried so far as to seem to nullify his energy as an evangelist. And when he further says, that "he shall ask help of all denominations," and "that no church is contributing to his work," we are led to question the propriety of making either statement.

We admire the fidelity of those who, without arrogance on the one hand, or an undue desire to please on the other, proclaim openly, yet gently and reverently, the fact of the New Age, and who explain its truths vigorously, entering under no obligations to those whose tenets they must in frankness deny in so far as they are founded upon old-time misapprehensions, and looking alone to the Lord and the body of those who receive Him in His Second Coming for support and supervision.

The Resurrection of the Body.

A WRITER has recently printed in the *Christian Union* an excellent statement of current beliefs on this subject. He says: —

There are three general views entertained by Christian men on this question of the Resurrection; namely:

1st. That at death the body dissolves, and the spiritual part of man, released from its confinement, goes to its own place in the other world, and there remains in conscious happiness or misery till the resurrection, when it re-enters its own body, made fit for its permanent occupancy, and with it, after the judgment, enters upon its eternal state of joy or sorrow.

2d. That the spiritual part of man, at death, leaves its material body forever behind, and in a kind of immaterial, ghostly body peculiar to it — "an elimination of a nonatomic enswathement of the soul," as Dr. Warren says — and enters at once upon its eternal state.

3d. That there is a complete suspension of consciousness from death till the resurrection; that when Christ shall come to judge the world all the dead will be raised and live again; the wicked will then or thereafter be utterly destroyed, and the righteous, in their spiritualized bodies, made incorruptible and immortal, like unto His own glorious body, shall live and reign with Him forever.

The first theory or hypothesis is that of the whole Papal Church. The Reformers brought it with them as an heir loom, with no essential modification, out of this church, and it remains to this day the belief of a majority of the Protestant world. But it is evidently fast losing its hold on intelligent inquirers, and cannot stand the test of careful examination in the light of either reason or revelation.

The second is the view advocated in the above-mentioned article, and is the one, if I mistake not, that is favored by the *Christian Union*. It is that of the Swedenborgians — though they hold to a somewhat more substantial spiritual body than some others. It is that of so-called "Spiritualists" generally, by whatever various names they may be known. It seems to have been the doctrine of the ancient Greeks and Romans, as it is indeed now of the pagan world, who believe in no other resurrection.

The third is, as we think, that which is taught in the Scriptures throughout, and especially by Christ and his Apostles, and which was held by the early church until its faith was corrupted by the coming in of Plato's phil-

osophy, which required a new construction to be put upon the language of God's Word.

The first view is that to which people of the New Church have generally looked as the one most opposed to the truth, and over its decline they have rejoiced. It now appears that another, equally erroneous, view is brought forward. It will gain, we think, very few adherents. A close look will show that it is essentially the first with a change in regard to the soul's condition before the final resurrection. It is the view of a literalist, is distinct enough, but utterly unheavenly. It is the view which made Martha lament at the grave of Lazarus, saying, "I know that he will rise again at the resurrection at the last day;" and it is the view which the Lord utterly swept away by His answer, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me SHALL NEVER DIE."

It would seem to be late now to set up a view quite common among the Jews in old time. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," cried the penitent thief, thinking, with this writer, of the far future. "TO-DAY," was the answer of Him who would not need to remember, "TO-DAY shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

A Sign of the Times.

REV. GEORGE C. MILN has lately resigned the pastorate of the East Congregational Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., by presenting a letter which is certainly a model of frankness. We have been especially pleased to see in Mr. Miln's statement of his position some indication that men are beginning to find a belief which is neither that of Athanasius nor of Arius; but is older than the Nicene Council, and utters itself in the Apostles' Creed. We wish that Mr. Miln, and others like him, might find the light which many have already found, and come into the full enjoyment of being at rest in perceiving and teaching the glorious truth partially stated in this extract:—

"I wish it to be understood that nothing is further from my thought than a desire to derogate the convictions and beliefs of others. In my short life, I have too often felt the sting of uncharitable criticism to think of piercing others with the same cruel barb. First of all, then, I ought to say that there is no difference between us as to belief — hearty, reverential, and loving — in a personal God, the Creator, the Friend, the Father of us all. Here we are at one. But as to the mode of the Divine existence, the aims and ends of the Divine government, we are not altogether agreed. For example, the 'prevalent theology' of this brotherhood adheres to the tri-

personality of the Divine nature. It holds to the individualism of three persons in one God. This I do not. I believe in one God, revealed to us as of a threefold nature and under a multiplicity of names. Tri-personality, as a dogma, affronts my reason and weakens my faith. The unity of God's nature, as a dogma, conciliates my reason, strengthens my faith, and seems to me to be more in consonance with the aggregate teaching of both the Testaments.

And yet I am not a Unitarian; and this, perhaps, is to be regretted. For then, in keeping with the Scriptural assertion which tells us that "every man goeth to his own place," I should find a welcome in the denomination of that name. I am not a Unitarian; for I believe not only in the "divinity," but in the deity of Jesus. In other words, I believe that the eternal "I Am" condescended to articulate himself for human comprehension in the person of him whom men call Jesus the Christ. Some of you, perhaps, have a faith identical with this; but the majority would choose to express their belief in a different way. In God as the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and Teacher of our race, I heartily believe; but the distinct and yet involved personality of the "third person" of a Trinity appears to me as a vague and needless dogma. Here, again, many of you would differ from me.

Those accustomed to the niceties of philosophical distinctions will discover how wide the distance between the views which I hold and those usually held by the evangelical circle of churches is, and will so see the wisdom of the step I now take. I do not wish to become a stirrer up of strife, and so quietly retire from a sphere to which I am, theologically speaking, no longer congenial. And I shall not again assume the position of teacher until I can do it free and untrammelled to present such views as my own mind honestly approves."

Pure Wine.

In the September number of this Magazine there appeared a brief notice of the pamphlet printed with the above title by our esteemed co-worker, Dr. John Ellis, of New York. The notice did Dr. Ellis an unintended injustice by speaking of his views in such a way as to give the impression that he ignored those passages of the Word which commend wine, when, in fact, Dr. Ellis's position is that these passages refer solely to unfermented wine. The writer of the notice referred to, prepared a second one in correction of his error, by which a valued friend was placed before our readers in the light of one who disregarded the teaching of the Word, and the second notice was duly included in the "make-up" of the October number, but was unaccountably lost; so that Dr. Ellis still remains in the minds of those who are not acquainted with him personally, or through his highly useful works on medical subjects, under the stigma of irreverence. We desire, therefore, to give this explanation the same publicity which the faulty notice received.

"*The Religion of Sensible Men.*"

In our October number, Rev. Edwin Gould, of Montreal, printed with brief comments, some extracts from a remarkable article having the above title, in the *North American Review*. Mr. Gould has kindly called attention to one other passage from the same article which is certainly worthy of attention. The new extract belongs at the end of the last quotation but one in the October number. Speaking of the probability that Christianity in its early days would have been condemned by many as a "deadly superstition," and yet it triumphed over all others, the writer added: —

"May there not be doctrines, apparently too absurd for discussion, which are spreading in obscure regions, far below the surface of conscious and articulate thought, and destined to have their day."

End of the Volume.

With the present number, the fourth volume of this series and the forty-ninth of the whole series come to an end. For reasons of future convenience, twelve numbers have been printed during the last nine months, and the volumes will commence hereafter with the January number. The unusual amount of matter required has taxed somewhat severely the strength and kindness of our contributors, all of whom with scarcely an exception work without pecuniary compensation. We wish to thank them for their assistance while expressing the hope that they are ready to continue their labors. We would ask also for a continuance of their friendly advice.

It is proposed to reduce the price of the next volume to two dollars. This is done in order to give the Magazine a wider circulation. Issuing as it does from an important centre of New-Church life and thought, — where it has the constant supervision and assistance of the ministers and laity of the Massachusetts Association, though kept free (it is to be hoped) from any sectional bias, — it may surely be made increasingly useful in promulgating the blessed truths of the New Age by exhibiting them in relation to the Word and to the literature and questions of the day. Clergymen of every sort will receive the Magazine for one dollar. May it go forth with the message to all, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." May it bring to many the "good tidings of great joy."

ERRATUM.

In the article in our November number on "the true place of Science in the domain of Truth," page 421, line 34, for Helinholtz read Helmholtz.